

Happy New Year



On Top Of The News Email: news@arubatoday.com Website: www.arubatoday.com Tel: 582-7800 Thursday, December 30, 2010

Post office marks new first-class stamps 'forever'



WASHINGTON — Postal patron Sean Swilling is tired of the inconvenience that comes with every change in the price of mailing a letter. That makes him just the type of customer the U.S. Postal Service wants to please with a policy designating all new first-class stamps as “forever.” Beginning in January, all new stamps good for 1 ounce of domestic first-class mail will forgo a printed denomination and be acceptable for the typical letter regardless of the current postal rate.

“I think that’s a great idea,” Swilling, a research analyst for commercial property, said Tuesday during a mail run at a downtown Washington post office. “For me, a guy who uses snail mail regularly, it’s a hassle to get 1- or 2-cent stamps. Streamline things that would be perfect.” The move is designed to help customers cope with postage increases, a Postal Service official told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

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BOOMER ANGST



RoxAnne Christley is seen in her home office in Roanoke, Va., in this photo taken Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010. Christley, a self-employed businesswoman, is a health adviser to mothers, who are breast feeding their infants, is on the young end of the Baby Boom, and doesn’t believe she’ll be able to rely on Medicare when she turns 65.

AP-GfK Poll: Baby boomers fear outliving Medicare

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR
JENNIFER AGIESTA

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The first baby boomers will be old enough to qualify for Medicare Jan. 1, and many fear the

program’s obituary will be written before their own.

A new Associated Press-GfK poll finds that baby boomers believe by a ratio of 2-to-1 they won’t be able to rely on the giant health insurance plan throughout

their retirement.

The boomers took a running dive into adolescence and went on to redefine work and family, but getting old is making them nervous.

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U.S. says having ambassador in Venezuela important

Venezuela’s President Hugo Chavez salutes upon his arrival to the Fort Tiuna military base to welcome Ecuador’s President Rafael Correa in Caracas, Venezuela, Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2010. Correa comes to Venezuela for a one-day visit.

Associated Press
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Feud over former Venezuelan president's body ends



CURT ANDERSON
LAURA WIDES-MUNOZ
associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Capping a series of events straight out of a telenovela, the mistress of charismatic and controversial former Venezuelan president Carlos Andres Perez agreed Wednesday to honor his estranged wife's wishes and allow his body to be buried in his homeland.

Perez's longtime partner Cecilia Matos and the couple's two adult daughters had planned to bury him in South Florida after a Mass on Wednesday.

But less than 24 hours before

the ceremony, lawyers for wife Blanca Rodriguez de Perez went to court and convinced a Miami-Dade Circuit Court judge to issue an order stopping it.

One of his daughters with Matos, Maria Francia Perez, told The Associated Press on Wednesday that his body will remain at the funeral home until it can be sent back to Venezuela. She was not sure when that would happen.

"This is a process that will take time, a mutual agreement among family," she said.

Rodriguez, who lives in Venezuela, maintained that

she had the right to decide what happened to Perez's body because, while the two were separated, they never legally divorced. She also claims Perez left no written instructions regarding his remains.

Their daughter, Carolina Perez, told The Associated Press in Caracas: "They're still married, and the law is very clear in Venezuela and in the United States: When the person dies, the one who has the right to reclaim the body is the spouse, and we exercised that right."

She said the family is glad to have the matter finished.

"This never should have happened, and thanks to God it ended this way," Carolina Perez said.

She said Perez's 37-year-old grandson Gabriel Perez will travel next week to Miami and will be in charge of organizing the transport of the body to Venezuela.

Matos, once Perez's secretary, was frequently identified as his current wife. It is not clear if they ever married and their daughter would not say.

The revelations regarding

Perez's personal life surprised many in Venezuela as they prepared to say goodbye to their former president, who died Saturday in Miami at 88.

His family in the U.S. had said Perez did not want to be buried in Venezuela until President Hugo Chavez, who led a failed 1992 coup against him, leaves office.

Perez's family in Venezuela wants him buried there next to his daughter Thais, who died 15 years ago.

Carolina Perez said she found out about her father's death from Twitter and her family was never consulted about the burial.

"We tried not to have it come to this, but it seems to us that the attitude of the Matos family to not take us into account at all forced us to do this," she said. "All of this is very sad because this is a very painful moment for the family."

She said she had been in contact with Chavez's government and Chavez has said the family has a right to bury Perez in his homeland.

Perez, who served from 1974-

79 and 1989-93, was a popular president who presided over an oil boom in the 1970s. He was later impeached during his second term in office and spent two years under house arrest in connection with mispending \$17 million in public funds. Authorities said part of that \$17 million was used to help bankroll the security detail of the woman running against the Sandinista candidate in Nicaragua's 1990 presidential election.

Perez always denied the charges of corruption and defended that spending as legitimate to help ensure stability in Central America after years of conflict.

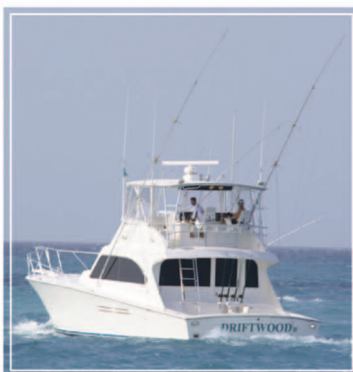
On Wednesday, a former vice president in Nicaragua's Sandinista government revealed that Perez also provided more than \$1 million in aid to the Sandinistas as they sought to topple Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza in the late 1970s.

The revelation is notable partly because Chavez is now a key backer of the left-leaning Sandinista party that Perez first helped. □

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Calif. man uses orphan background to help others

PASADENA, Calif. —A photo of a 12-year-old North Korean boy on Sam Han's laptop computer pulls the dying man a half-century back in time, across continents to where he once wandered in search of his parents.

Separated from his family during the Korean War, Han was sheltered by strangers until an unlikely meeting set him on a journey to the United States. He was adopted by a Minnesota professor and became a successful business executive.

Now Han wants to give other overseas orphans a shot at making a life for themselves, but his time is running out.

The soft-spoken man with twinkling eyes sleeps little: He works most days to ship soy flour and rice meal packages to North Korean orphanages and help build a school for orphans in Tanzania. He spends nights on the phone with advocates overseas and lobbies lawmakers for a bill to let Americans adopt North Korean orphans.

It is a far cry from the lifestyle he enjoyed while building a multimillion-dollar global chemical company, consulting business and condo development in Los Angeles. He hobnobbed with Republican politicians and flew to Asia to hammer out deals.

Then, in 2002, he was diagnosed with terminal cancer and given just a few years to live.

Han moved into his daughter's home, where he started a children's foundation in this Los Angeles suburb. And while he undergoes expensive rounds of stem cell therapy and clinical trials for bone marrow cancer, he believes it's more than medicine keeping him alive.

The prospect of losing everything gave him purpose and a reason to live. "Many doctors didn't think I'd live very long, but here I am," he said. "The cancer awakened me."

Ambition is no stranger to Han. It led him, as a 12-year-old, to a Korean hospital where he hoped to learn

about medicine and where he met the man who became his adoptive father.

Han lost his parents and sister during a chaotic exodus of his village in December 1950, when North Korean troops had reached the bridge over the Han River. Then 6, Han wandered door-to-door in a poor village, begging for food. A farmer agreed to raise Han with his own two children. They lived in a tiny room for six years before Han returned to Seoul with dreams of becoming a doctor, to help the sick he saw lying in the fields he crossed when his family fled. It was at a local hospital where he was being shooed away by a receptionist when two American officials overheard him. One was Arthur Schneider, a forestry expert and University of Minnesota professor in Korea to help rebuild Seoul National University after the war. After listening to the boy for two hours, Schneider offered to pay for his education.

Eventually, Schneider petitioned to adopt Han and bring him to the United States. But U.S. law did not allow single parents to bring adopted children from overseas, and Schneider lobbied hard for an exception. He learned Han's father had died, and he tracked down his mother, who had remarried and agreed to let her son go to America.

In 1961, Congress passed the bill on Han's behalf.

In the U.S., Sang Man Han dubbed Sam by his American friends finished high school and earned a master's in business administration. He took a job in Europe with DuPont, then started his own chemical trading company.

In 2002, Han felt pains in his chest. He was diagnosed with bone marrow cancer, and given three to five years to live.

He had chemotherapy, then stem cell treatment. He got better, then worse. His skin itched from the treatment; his sheets were tinged with blood from scratching.

Han decided he wanted to do one last thing before he died honor his adoptive father by

helping other orphans.

"He sold the house, he gave up all his belongings," said Han's 32-year-old daughter, Laura. "He sold everything he possibly owned."

The cash largely went to a real estate investment that flopped and depleted much of the wealth he accumulated in the 1980s. The remaining \$50,000 helped create a nonprofit to aid orphans overseas, Han said.

Run out of Han's bedroom, the Han-Schneider International Children's Foundation is a small network of volunteers who send meals to two state-run North Korean orphanages and help support orphanages in Cambodia and Tanzania.

Tax records show the organization raised \$34,000 in 2009 enough, they say, to



send 144,000 meal packets to North Korea and thousands of dollars more in donated clothing and food.

Grace Yoo, executive director of the Korean American Coalition in Los Angeles, said several dozen groups have sprung up to send aid to North Korea, but Han's drive caught her attention. "Here is a man

right now who shouldn't be walking he is in so much pain but anyone who looks at him would not know," Yoo said. "This is what inspires him to really continue surviving."

Han is lobbying for a bill to encourage the federal government to let Americans adopt North Korean orphans. □

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Date: Friday, December 31st, 2010
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New Year's Day No Limit Hold'em Poker Tournament

Date: Saturday, January 1st, 2011
Time: 7 pm

Weekly Slot Tournament

Date: Saturday, January 1st, 2011
Time: 9:00 pm
Live Music

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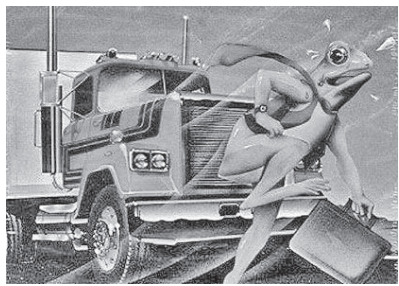
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Man playing real-life 'Frogger' hit by SUV



CLEMSON, S.C. — A man has been hospitalized after police in South Carolina say he was hit by an SUV while playing a real-life version of the video game "Frogger."

Authorities said the 23-year-old man was taken to a hospital in Anderson after he was struck at around 9 p.m. Monday.

In the "Frogger" arcade game, players move frogs through traffic on a busy road and through a hazard-filled river. Before he was hit, police say the man had been discussing the game with his friends.

Chief Jimmy Dixon says the man yelled "go" and darted into oncoming traffic in the four-lane highway. No charges are expected against the driver. The name of the man who was struck has not been released. He was in stable condition Monday night. □

STAMPS

Continued from Front Page

The official requested anonymity to discuss a policy that hasn't been announced formally. Postmaster General Patrick R. Donahoe plans to announce the new policy Jan. 14, the official said.

Jim Plante, a federal employee mailing a letter in downtown Washington, doesn't see the policy as a major change in doing business.

"They get my money in advance, but I'll use them eventually. It will save me a penny or two," Plante said. "It won't cure their deficit, but if it helps them out a bit, why not?"

The Postal Service unveiled its first-class commemorative stamps for 2011 on Tuesday. All were marked with the word "forever" instead of the current rate of 44 cents.

The initial first-class stamp under the new policy will be the Lunar New Year: Year of the Rabbit stamp, to be issued Jan. 22. It will be followed by stamps commemorating Kansas statehood on Jan. 29 and, in February, the centennial of President Ronald Reagan's birth. The Forever Stamp, first issued in April 2007

and featuring the Liberty Bell, was designed for use regardless of changes in postal rates. They are sold at the prevailing price of domestic first-class postage.

The Postal Service says that 28 billion Forever Stamps have been sold since, generating \$12.1 billion in total revenue. The stamps without denominations already account for 85 percent of its stamp program, the service says.

The Postal Service sought a 2-cent increase in postage rates for 2011, but the independent Postal Rate Commission rejected the request. The post office is appealing the decision in federal court.

The Internet and the economic downturn have been cited for a 3.5 percent decline in mail volume from 2009 to 2010.

The Postal Service lost \$8.5 billion in the year ending Sept. 30, even after trimming more than 100,000 jobs in recent years, and estimates it will lose \$6 billion to \$7 billion in the next year. One of its proposals for dealing with its financial troubles calls for cutting delivery to five days a week instead of six, a change Congress must approve. □

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New Year's Dinner & Dance

A memorable beach side party under the stars

8:00 pm to 1:00 am

Seating around the pool or on the beach

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Entrée

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Dessert

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Adults will receive \$40 in non-redeemable casino match play coupons

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Includes Super Premium open bar, party favors and a midnight champagne toast with firework

New Year's Eve Dance

A memorable beach side party under the stars

Includes Super Premium open bar from 10:00 pm to 1:00 am

Viennese Dessert Table with Fancy Pastries and Cakes

Party favors and a midnight champagne toast with firework

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BABY BOOMER

Continued from Front Page

Now, forty-three percent say they don't expect to be able to depend on Medicare forever, while only 20 percent think their Medicare is secure. The rest have mixed feelings.

Yet the survey also shows a surprising willingness among adults of all ages to sacrifice to preserve Medicare benefits that most Americans say they deserve after years of paying taxes into the system at work. Take the contentious issue of Medicare's eligibility age, fixed at 65, while the qualifying age for Social Security is rising gradually to 67.

Initially, 63 percent of boomers in the poll dismissed the idea of raising the eligibility age to keep Medicare afloat financially. But when the survey forced them to choose between raising the age or cutting benefits, 59 percent said raise the age and keep the benefits.

"I don't mind the fact that people may have to work a little longer," said Lynn Barlow, 60, a real estate agent who lives outside Atlanta. Especially if there's time to plan, laboring a few extra years allows people to save more for retirement. Bring up benefit cuts and Barlow isn't nearly as accommodating. "I started working when I was 16 and I expect a benefit after putting into it for so many years," she said.

As Medicare reaches a historic threshold, the poll also found differences by age, gender and income among baby boomers. For example, baby boom women, who can expect to live longer than both their mothers and their husbands, are much more pessimistic than men about the program's future.

Medicare is a middle-class bulwark against the ravages of illness in old age. It covers 46 million elderly and disabled people at an annual cost of about \$500 billion. But the high price of American-style medicine, stressing intensive treatment and the latest innovations, is already straining program finances. Add the number of baby boomers, more than 70 million born between 1946

and 1964, and Medicare's fiscal foundation starts to shake.

Here's the math: when the last of the boomers reaches age 65 in about two decades, Medicare will be covering more than 80 million people. At the same time, the ratio of workers paying taxes to support the program will have plunged from 3.5 for each person receiving benefits currently, to 2.3.

"The 800-pound gorilla is eating like mad and growing to 1,200 pounds," said economist Eugene Steuerle of the Urban Institute, warning about the imbalance. "The switch from worker to retiree status has implications for everything."

The government can't balance its books without dealing with health care costs, and Medicare is in the middle. Some leading Republicans and a few Democrats have called for phasing out the program and instead giving each retiree a fixed payment — or voucher — to help them buy private medical insurance of their choice. The poll found doubts about the idea, and a generational debate.

Overall, a narrow majority (51 percent) of Americans opposed the voucher plan. But those born after 1980 favored it by 47 percent to 41 percent, while seniors opposed it 4-to-1. A majority of boomers were also opposed, with 43 percent strongly objecting.

However, younger boomers like RoxAnne Christley of Roanoke, Va., were more likely to be favorable.

"I think that's a possibility if it brings choices and competition," said Christley, 47. "We don't need to stimulate the government; we need to stimulate the economy. A lot of people have different choices when it comes to medical coverage, and I see nothing wrong with that at all." Christley is self-employed, counseling new mothers on breast feeding.

Changes that don't involve a full-scale re-engineering of Medicare tended to draw more support in the poll, especially when the survey forced people to choose between giving up benefits or making some other kind of sacrifice.

For example, 61 percent of

Americans overall favored raising Medicare taxes to avoid a cut in benefits. The current payroll tax is 2.9 percent on wages, evenly divided between workers and their employers. The new health care law added a surcharge of 0.9 percent on earnings over \$200,000 for individuals and \$250,000 for couples filing jointly.

When forced to choose, even a majority of Republicans said they would rather pay higher taxes (53 percent) than cut benefits (38 percent). Among adults in their 20s, who'd face a whole career paying higher taxes, 61 percent said they would be willing to pay more to preserve benefits. Only 29 percent of boomers said keep taxes the same but cut benefits.

"If people are forced to the wall and something has to be done about the financial shape



Realtor Lynn Barlow poses for a portrait in her home in Canton, Ga., in this photo taken Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010. Barlow believes she and her husband, who have paid into the Medicare program their whole working lives, and are entitled to collect benefits. At the same time, she's willing to make some sacrifices to preserve the level of services.

Associated Press

of the program, they would rather take their medicine by raising taxes and moving the eligibility age than having the

benefits cut when they retire," said polling analyst Robert Blendon of the Harvard School of Public Health.

WISHING YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Airport Branch
will be closed on the
following dates:

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U.S. bison ranchers struggle to meet consumer demand



MINNEAPOLIS – The deep snow blanketing the Midwest prairie didn't bother the bison on Ed Eichten's ranch one bit. The hardy animals evolved to survive even thrive year-round on the open range, and with their big heads, they can plow right through drifts 5-feet tall or more. The majestic beasts are a hot commodity these days, as consumer demand for healthy meat has sent prices soaring. But although bison are what one rancher calls "a self-care animal," most farmers

are struggling to increase their herds and keep up with demand. Bison grow slower than other livestock, and a heifer can't have her first calf until she's 3, said Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association in Westminster, Colo. Beef cows can have calves at 2. Also, many producers are finding heifers more valuable for breeding than eating, which means fewer bison going to market at least temporarily, he said. The tight supply comes after

bison farmers spent much of the past decade aggressively courting consumers by touting the health benefits of the low-fat, low-cholesterol meat. Bison caught on, and even in the economic slump, prices haven't discouraged consumers. "Now our challenge is keeping up with that demand," Carter said. Eichten's family has about 250 head near Center City, about 40 miles north of Minneapolis. He sells meat at farmers markets, over the Internet and through the family's retail store and restaurant. Eichten's Hidden Acres also supplies local restaurants and co-op grocers. Aaron Nytroe, meat and seafood manager at The Wedge co-op grocery in Minneapolis, said he can't get enough bison meat. He sells out deliveries from Eichten's most weeks, and with demand "growing exponentially," he said he might even look at

finding a second supplier to keep up. Bison fans say the meat doesn't taste gamy it has a rich, beefy flavor but is a little sweeter. Since it's so lean, chefs say preparing it properly requires slower cooking over lower heat than beef. They say steaks shouldn't be cooked past medium or medium rare. Those who prefer meat well done might want to try a bison pot roast. While retail prices vary, ground bison has been selling for about \$7 a pound, compared with a little over \$5 a year ago, Carter said. But it's still a niche product. About 92,000 head of bison were processed last year in North America, according to the association. That's less than one day's beef production in the U.S. alone. "It will take us five-plus years to ramp up and keep a consistent supply," said Gail Griffin, who's been

raising bison for 20 years and is the executive director of the Minnesota Buffalo Association and immediate past president of the national group. "But there's every indication, for sure this year and indications over the last three actually, that people are shifting to larger herds or creating new herds." South Dakota, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska and Colorado are the top bison states, but the animals are raised in all 50, Carter said, including a herd on the Big Island of Hawaii and one on Long Island in New York. The U.S. Department of Agriculture counted about 4,500 ranches and farms with nearly 200,000 bison in the U.S. in its 2007 Census of Agriculture. The total North American herd, which includes animals in state and national parks, is estimated at 450,000, compared with fewer than 1,000 a little over a century ago.

CNN founder Ted Turner is the world's largest bison rancher with about 55,000 head. He co-founded the Ted's Montana Grill chain in 2002 to help popularize the meat, and it now sells about 1.5 million pounds of bison a year, about 40 percent of its annual sales of about \$100 million, chief executive and co-founder George McKerrow Jr. said. The chain's bison burgers typically run \$12 to \$15, or \$3 more than the same burgers made from beef. When the Atlanta-based company raised prices by \$1 earlier this year, customers kept forking it out. "Right now the consumer loves the product enough to pay for it," McKerrow said. □

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3 - 2 - 1 Happy New Year!!



In anticipation of that great moment when the clock finally strikes twelve, I thought it would be nice and refreshing to set forth some of the best champagne cocktails known 'round the world. I know that to some purists, the mixing of champagne with anything might seem unthinkable let alone undrinkable (almost) but for cocktail lovers, champagne or sparkling wine can be a choice ingredient with which to add other interesting flavors. Maybe it's time to sample one or two in anticipation.

Champagne Cobbler

1/2 tsp lemon juice, 1/2 tsp Curaçao, thin slice of orange, chilled champagne. Fill a large goblet half full of cracked ice. Add lemon juice, Curaçao, and orange slice. Stir and fill glass with champagne or sparkling wine. Stir again ever so gently.

Regent's Punch

Three bottles of Champagne or sparkling wine, two of Madeira, one of German white wine, an ounce of Curaçao, a quart of brandy, a pint of rum, two bottles of seltzer, four pounds of raisins, oranges and lemons, sugar, and all diluted with green tea. ☐

Constructing the Jolly Pirates from Hand with Sand

Aruba's most famous Sand Castle guests return

HADICURARI - Sheldon and Alexandra Pettle from Canada, Chris and Shelly NeJame with their children Chris Jr. and Britney together with Steven O'Brien hailing from New York, are back on Aruba for the 22nd time to build the biggest daily sand castle each day that they are on the island. They are guests and owners at the Caribbean Palm Village Resort and enjoy the unique island ambiance of MooMba Beach Bar and Restaurant. On Tuesday, the group built a replica of the Jolly Pirates frigate with their hands out of sand.

On Aruba, the water temperature is lovely, the sun is shining and guiding in the New Year with a plunge into the ocean is no hardship at all. Aruba's visitors and locals join thousands doing the same all over the world – but hardly in the same water conditions!! This second Diveversity /MooMba Unox Nieuwjaarsduik has an added



benefit: not only do you get rid of the hangover you might have from partying till early morning on the 31st, you get a bowl of Unox Erwtensoeep with sausage as well. This Dutch traditional pea soup will heat you up after your plunge and it will have you in terrific shape for more partying in no time flat. The Nieuwjaarsduik forms part of a worldwide event. At 12 o'clock noon on

January 1, the signal for the plunge is given and swimmers will be racing off towards the ocean seeking eternal fame.

Last year, 160 Unox hats were given to participants; this year, there are now 500 hats await the swimmers. Participation is free of charge and everyone is welcome to join in.

Sponsors of the event are Unox, Diveversity and MooMba Beach. ☐



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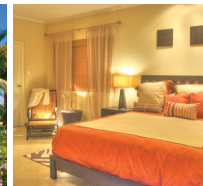
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You are invited!

Celebrate New Year's Glitter Eve at CILO City Lounge



ORANEJSTAD - Come and celebrate New Year's Eve and the start of a fabulous new year at CILO City Lounge in the Renaissance Marketplace and enjoy an evening with live music by local favorite Angelo Koolman, the count down and a champagne toast at midnight. New Year's Eve is a time to spend with friends and family: at CILO everyone is your friend. The Glitter and Glamour party starts at 10 pm; casual chic is the dress code, but you can come however you like. Entrance is free of charge and New Year's Eve snacks are passed around during the entire evening. The festivities will go on until it is time to wrap up the party, so that might be quite late, or early, depending how you look at it. ☐



Don't drink & DRIVE

Would ou like to adopt me?

Boefie is on the look-out for friends and family members

We would like to introduce Boefie to you, one of the donkeys living at the Aruban Donkey Sanctuary. She is the oldest of the newly-borns; about 6 months old. Her mother Tootsie came to the sanctuary when she was pregnant with Boefie. Her mother had been roaming in the Jamanota vicinity together with two other donkeys. Boefie was already adopted before she was even born; this was by two from Holland, who named her Boefie. But of course, this lovely donkey can use more adoptive parents.

In the beginning, Boefie was very timid: she had learned that from her mother. But before we knew, she became jealous of colleague baby Thunder, who is very affectionate and who loves attention. Boefie wanted that too, so now you can pat and cuddle

her and she adores that. You can really tell!

Boefie has a chip, just like the other donkeys. This way she can be recognized and all her medical information is on it.

The donkeys at the sanctuary are well-cared for: they get their food and drink and when they are sick the vet is called. Yes, they are expensive customers. The volunteers try to cover the cost through organizing all kinds of activities and by selling nice souvenirs in the store. Fortunately there are visitors who adopt a donkey now and then, who donate money or who buy something in the store. They help keep the sanctuary afloat that way.

The volunteers are now looking for people who wish to adopt Boefie. She will stay at the sanctuary, of course; the only thing that is needed is that AWG.



30,-- per month is paid for her keep. In this way you help support this wonderful donkey as well as the sanctuary. You will receive a nice document and a super

T-shirt. And if you like, your name and photo will be posted on our website. Please call the shelter at 595-2933 and become Boefie's new family member; you

can also register as an adoptive parent via our website www.arubadonkey.org or deposit a donation on our Aruba Bank account 40.03.025. Please help! ☐

Palm Beach boasts authentic Mediterranean cuisine



By ARUBA TODAY

PALM BEACH -- When we say Mediterranean cuisine, we mean the food from the adjacent nation-states sharing the shores of the Mediterranean, embracing many cultures and influenced by varied customs.

At Casa Tua Mediterranee, the menu offers a trip around that sunshiny, lively part of the world, without ever having to buy an airline ticket, starting at the Atlantic and traveling traverse Europe to Turkey, on to the Middle East and North Africa.

We discovered that the chefs choose the best, most delicious dishes from France, Italy,

Greece, and Tunisia, and paired them with most famous Middle-Eastern appetizers and salads to present a formidable culinary trip around the Mediterranean Sea, enjoyed in the contemporary indoor dining room which includes a cozy lounge area or on the dining terrace overlooking the action at the new bustling Palm Beach Plaza.

Spanokopitakia, brick oven baked filo pastries filled with Greek cheese and spinach, famous Tzaziki, a yogurt and cucumber dip, and popular Babaganoush and Hummus, with authentic pita bread, are some of the most popular appetizers.

For main courses our traditional Moussaka is justly called, the best you will ever have, and the genuine Tunisian Couscous, loaded with merguez, chicken and lamb, is rivaled only by the Tenderloin, Lamb and Chicken kebabs. Casa Tua pays homage to provincial



cooking with our Grilled Whole Red Snapper, flavored with herbs de Provence, and our Mussels, taste the way they're served in the port of Marseille. Our thin crust Italian Pizza, needs no introduction, as it has earned a huge following in both the other restaurants, Casa Tua Pizzeria and Casa Tua Barcelona.

To top off the authentic Mediterranean feast, the Oriental belly dancers entertain every night and you may complement the exotic evening with a flavored hookah pipe and endless new st le cocktails featuring Strawberry Field Mojito, and Bubble Royal Champagne Martin.

Casa Tua is your-home-in-Aruba, a perfect spot for people who love to live, and love to eat and party.

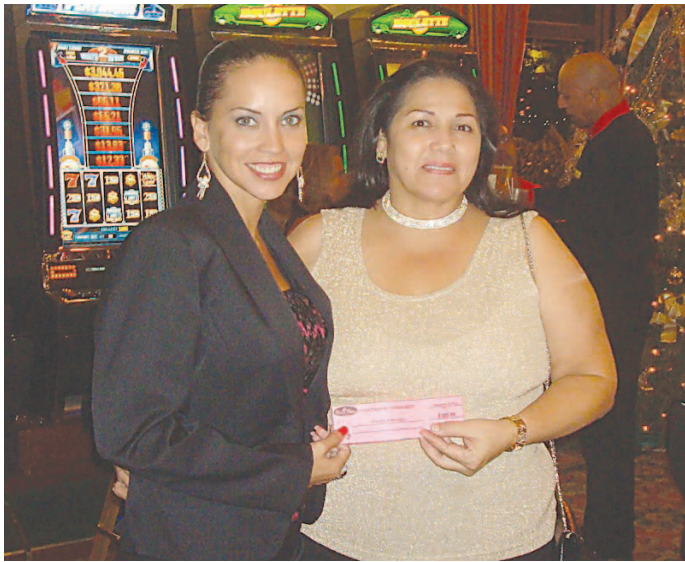
Located across of the cinemas, at Palm Beach Plaza, you can drop in for a bite or refreshment after the movies.

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www.casatuaaruba.com

Join us for Daily ½ Price Happy Hour from 5:30 till 7:30 p.m. and then again from 10:30 till 11:30 p.m. after the movies!!

BlackJack Tournament Awards Cool Cash



PALM BEACH – Locals and visitors enjoyed BlackJack action at Cool Casino when the Christmas Edition of the tournament unfolded with more than 100 guests in attendance. Top winners Ali Fakih, Vincent Champ and Mireila Wever shared the bulk of the generous

\$10,000 pot, while finalists Meredith Eckmeyer, Narciso Geerman, Andres Tromp and Linda Dirks who also battled for their tournament finalists positions, received a cash consolation prize. All casino visitors enjoyed live music with pan-man Nico Connor, delicious snacks and

bottomless cocktails from the early evening hours until late into the night.

Pictured here, the lucky Casino Manager, at Cool Casino, Riu Palace. Hostess and Sandro Lacle,

Lost Dog Found

ORANJESTAD - He was found across of Renaissance wandering around. He has a collar on with a little bell (there are dog bones on the collar, black and beige colored).

He is very friendly and happy if he sees children and when he saw a white pickup truck he started running after this. It seems that he is lost, maybe because of the fireworks that started.



At this moment he is staying at a friends house, where he gets doxy, because he is bleeding from his nose. For the rest he looks healthy. He eats and drinks, so this is a good sign. Please help us find people that might know the dog. For more information please call 593 9116 or 594 3323

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The Casino at the Radisson rewards patrons with cash prizes



PALM BEACH – The Casino at the Radisson Aruba, Resort, Casino & Spa hosted a number of events over the holidays including a Pre-Christmas Poker Tournament, a lively edition of the weekly Slot Tournament and a mega Boxing Day Poker Tournament. Just before Christmas, on Thursday, December 23rd, a pot of \$2,900 was split upon

the request of the winners, awarding Pierre, a repeat guest from the Netherlands and Roxanne from Miami, an equal amount of cash. Locals got lucky when the weekly Slot Tournament concluded, awarding a share of the \$600 pot to 1st place winner Regina Tromp, 2nd place winner Angel Lopez, and 3rd place winner, Lismara Rustveld on Saturday,



December 25th, Christmas Day.

On Sunday, for the Boxing Day Poker Tournament, on December 26th, 1st place winner Seth Ampolsky, a repeat guest of the Radisson who has been staying at the resort for the past ten years pocketed \$2,535, winning the tournament for the 2nd time in 2 years. Another 1st place winner, Miguel Marcano, staying at the Amsterdam Manor, received the other chop split jackpot for the amount of \$2,535 with 3rd place winner Gene Bogomolny, accepting \$1,560.00, and 4th place winner Michael Orik, earned \$ 936.00.

The casino is inviting guests for a number of memorable upcoming events such as the Pre – New Year's No Limit Hold'em Poker Tournament on Thursday, December 30th, 2010, at 7:00 pm, with a buy in of \$115 (\$100 + \$15 Fee), with Live Music; The

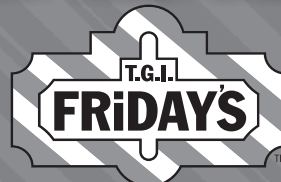


New Year's Eve Party, which promises to be an evening of fun with prizes and surprises, welcoming the New Year in style, on Friday, December 31st, with Complimentary Champagne Toasts at Midnight, and Live music; The New Year's Day No Limit Hold'em Poker Tournament, on Saturday,

January 1st, 2011, at 7 pm, with buy in \$ 225 (\$200\$ + \$25 Fee) with Live music; the Weekly Slot Tournament, on Saturday, January 1st, 2011, at 9:00 pm, with Live Music and the On Going Poker Bad Beat, whose "Bad Beat" jackpot currently stands on \$7.489. Pictured here some of last week's winners. □



Spend your New Year's Eve at



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We apologize for our technical problems with our kitchen exhaust extractor. Thank you for your understanding. We are again fully operational & ready to serve you!





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HUMAN HINTS

Where To Find Your Power

We've been talking about Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Human Game. Phase 1 is about limitation and Phase 2 is about expansion. The Phase we play in is up to us, the limited players in the game. In a sense, the intention of the player directs the intention of the expanded self.

If a player chooses to play in Phase 1 limitation, the intention of expanded self will be to make the player feel limited and powerless. If the player chooses to play in Phase 2, the expanded self will provide opportunities to expand and to reclaim your power from the illusory hologram.

Expanded self writes the story and infuses it with power to make it seem real. The hologram is generated by the power of our expanded self, who is just another aspect of our selves. We as the players, are immersed within our own consciousness, held together by our own power.

Your power that generates the hologram is not evenly distributed, it is concentrated in certain areas of the illusion. The areas of concentrated power represent vast storehouses of your own personal power, right in front of you.

How do you find them? Remember that the purpose of Phase 1 is to make you feel powerless. When you feel powerless, it is usually extremely uncomfortable and emotionally disturbing. It takes a great deal of power to convince you that you're the opposite of who you really are. The more powerless we feel, the more emotional we become. Your power is brilliantly hidden all around you, disguised as your own discomfort.

The more emotional you are about an aspect of the hologram, the more of your power is stored there. Now we have to learn how to access the personal power of our Hologram.

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you chose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

HumanHints.com, PO Box 997, Vail, CO 81658
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Native Americans: 'Our New Overlords'

Barack Obama's announcement that the U.S. would support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People has ignited fear among some members of the far right. The declaration, which is not legally binding, asserts that "indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources" that they traditionally owned or occupied, according to Talking Points Memo. Such provisions have caused Bryan Fischer of the American Family Association to declare on his blog that "President Obama wants to give the entire land mass of the United States of America back to the Indians. He wants Indian tribes to be our new overlords." A few days later, World Net Daily blogger Eugene Koprowski added fuel to the fire by suggesting that the UN resolution could "accomplish something as radical as relinquishing some U.S. sovereignty and opening up a path for the return of ancient tribal lands to American Indians, including even parts of Manhattan."

Needless to say, some find Fischer's and Koprowski's assumptions that the President intends to return the entirety of the United States, starting with Manhattan, to Native Americans, a bit unrealistic. This week, liberal bloggers react to the overreaction.

This 'Kooky' Theory Will Gain Traction Joan McCarter at Daily Kos fears it won't be long before the assertion that Native American tribes will soon be "our new overlords" from the fringe into the mainstream right dialogue. "This is only slightly less kooky than good ol' Colorado governor candidate Dan Maes' great UN-taking-over-American-cities-with-bicycles conspiracy theory, but mark my words, it's going to get traction," McCarter predicts. "Pretty soon we're going to be seeing it on Beck and then Limbaugh and before you know it, Michele Bachmann will be introducing resolutions on the House floor about it."

Part of the Republican Plan Tom Levenson at

Balloon Juice wonders if the uproar over the UN Declaration isn't just a tactic in the Republican Party's attempt to "destroy Obama's presidency." He writes:

Look, this is fun and all, and yes, people spending even seconds seriously considering the notion that Barack Obama could or would just hand over chunks of the US to whoever he wants need medical help (where are those damn meds, honey?), but as usual, this isn't about what the folks weighing in so ponderously on Fox say it is.

'No Good Reason Not to Support' the Declaration Appalled by the immediate surge of opposition, Salon's Alex Pareene explains why the US's commitment to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People is a good thing, calling it:

A non-legally binding promise to finally treat indigenous peoples with some small amount of decency after hundreds of years of the government murdering them and expelling them from their homes and forcibly relocating them to barren desert ghettos and now just letting them live in conditions of appalling, abject poverty. Bush refused to sign on to this, because, I dunno, it was from the U.N., and it might lead to frivolous lawsuits, or something? It's a non-binding Declaration that basically says "we will be nice to indigenous people," there's no good reason not to support it.

Just Another Group of People to Hate Zandar at No More Mister Nice Blog thinks the "Obama is giving Manhattan back to the indians" rumor is just another product of the fringe's penchant for fear mongering.

Bonus for the wingers, an all-new (all old) group of people to hate in Native Americans. Combine the specter of "Oh noes, reparations!" with the fever dreams of "He's not really one of us", add a layer of "One World UN Gubment!" and stir in a big sticky glob of good ol' racism and you get "Obama is gonna give Manhattan back to them!" □

Why Is Karzai 'Longing' For President Bush?

A U.S. State Department cable from July 2009, released by WikiLeaks, shows Afghan President Hamid Karzai pining for the early years of the Bush administration, which he called a "golden age" for the country. Here's what Afghanistan-watchers are saying about this strange admission, including the pushback Karzai got from U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry, who wrote the cable in question.

How Eikenberry Responded Here are excerpts from U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry's response to Karzai's "golden age" comments, which Eikenberry called "a familiar theme." I reminded Karzai that we had agreed our discussion would be forward-looking, rather than dwell on past grievances. I also reminded him the U.S. and ISAF had made a tremendous effort over the past year to avoid civilian casualties.

I also took issue with Karzai's "golden age" perspective, reminding him that I had been in Afghanistan during this period. It was clear, even at that

time, that trouble was brewing as the focus on security and reconstruction drifted and declined due to lack of resources and a comprehensive strategy. I urged Karzai to recognize that President Obama is providing the U.S.-Afghan partnership with the tools necessary to build a lasting foundation for Afghanistan's success

The Romance Is Over Newser's Polly David Doig quips, "The White House doesn't bring Hamid Karzai flowers anymore, and the Afghan president is caught in a diplomatic cable waxing poetically over 'the golden age' of US-Afghan relations under George W Bush. The cable was sent by Ambassador Karl Eikenberry last year after a meeting with Karzai, reports the Huffington Post. Eikenberry admonished Karzai, diplomatically, we assume, to get his head in the present."

'Consumed' By Anti-Americanism The Huffington Post's Amanda Terkel evaluates: "Longing for the early years of the Bush administration, Afghan President Hamid Karzai has been

consumed by anti-U.S. conspiracy theories, convinced American officials are now working against him." She says Karzai is taking "a 'blame America' approach" and that this makes "him and the Afghan government not seem like credible partners." She adds, "Karzai was convinced that Obama administration officials were helping his challengers." Proves Obama's Failure Conservative blogger Jim Hoft writes, "It's not just the American people who are sick of the Obama-Pelosi regime. Afghan leader Harmid Karzai wrote in 2009 that he longed for the 'golden age' of US-Afghan relations like during the Bush years.

Barack Obama has been accused of having no strategy, no benchmarks and no end point when it comes to Afghanistan." Crooks Love Other Crooks One Democratic Underground commenter scoffs at the Karzai quote: "Crooks love the company of other crooks." FireDogLake's Attaturk adds, "I guess there haven't been any recent pipeline kickbacks and big bags o' cash." □

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5 arrested in plot to attack prophet cartoon paper

JAN M. OLSEN,
Associated Press
COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) — Police in Denmark and Sweden halted an imminent terrorist attack Wednesday by arresting five men who planned to shoot as many people as possible in a building housing the newsroom of a paper that published cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, officials said. Denmark's intelligence service said that after months of surveillance it arrested four men in two raids in suburbs of the capital, Copenhagen, and seized a submachine gun, a silencer and ammunition. In Sweden, police said they arrested a 37-year-old Swedish citizen of Tunisian origin living in Stockholm. "An imminent terror attack has been foiled," said Jakob Scharf, head of the Danish Security and Intelligence Service, or PET. He described some the suspects as "militant Islamists with relations to international terror networks" and said that more arrests

were possible. Scharf said the assault — to be carried out before this weekend — could have been similar to the terrorist attack in the Indian city of Mumbai in 2008 during which gunmen killed 166 people. "It is our assessment that the plan was to try to get access" to the newspaper office and "carry out a Mumbai-style attack," Scharf told reporters. PET said it seized a 44-year-old Tunisian, a 29-year-old Lebanese-born man and a 30-year-old who were living in Sweden and had entered Denmark late Tuesday or early Wednesday. The fourth person detained was a 26-year-old Iraqi asylum-seeker living in Copenhagen. The Danish intelligence service said the group had been planning to enter the building where the Jyllands-Posten daily has its Copenhagen newsdesk and "to kill as many of the people present as possible."

The four men face preliminary

charges of attempting to carry out an act of terrorism. They will face a custody hearing Thursday.

"I am shocked that a group of people have concrete plans to commit a serious terrorist attack in this country," Danish Prime Minister Loeke Rasmussen told reporters. "I want to stress that regardless of today's event it remains my conviction that terrorism must not lead us to change our open society and our values, especially democracy and free speech."

Danish and Swedish police, who appeared at a joint new conference in Copenhagen, said they had been tailing the suspects for several months. Anders Danielsson, the head of Sweden's security police, said they followed a car rented by three of the suspects from Stockholm to the Danish border late Tuesday or early Wednesday. "We knew that



Undated file photo of Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten headquarters in Århus Denmark. Three terror suspects who were arrested in an alleged al-Qaida plot in Norway were likely planning an attack against the Danish newspaper that caricatured the Prophet Muhammad, Norwegian and Danish police said Tuesday, Sep. 28, 2010.

Associated Press

there were weapons in the car," he said. Scharf said the three men were arrested as they left a suburban Copenhagen apartment, "either heading out to carry out the terror attack or to do some kind of reconnaissance."

The Iraqi asylum-seeker was arrested in another suburb of Copenhagen, Scharf said. Zubair Butt Hussain, a spokesman for the Muslim Council of Denmark, called the plan "extremely worrying."

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Northern Ireland faces mounting water crisis



Members of the fire service fill tanks with water as people queue with empty bottles to collect water, as tens of thousands of homes and businesses are affected by severe water shortages caused by broken pipes, outside Avoniel leisure center in east Belfast, Northern Ireland, Wednesday, Dec. 29, 2010.

Associated Press

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) — Frustration and fears of disease mounted in Northern Ireland on Wednesday as 36,000 people were left without water, some for more than a week, after a deep freeze and a sudden thaw

caused aging pipes to burst. With reservoirs running low, water supplies were cut off in many towns and cities, and residents turned to emergency water tankers and bottled water for their cooking, cleaning and drinking needs. "It's been a nightmare," said James Lawson, a resident in Lisburn, near Belfast, who has gone without water for 13 days. "You can't wash, you can't eat because you can't wash your dishes. I think it's a fiasco," he told the BBC. Scotland said it was sending 160,000 liters (42,000 gallons) of bottled water to help meet demand. Northern Ireland's Deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness, called the situation "a grave crisis," and said people had been let down

by their water supplier. The Northern Ireland government scheduled an emergency meeting for Thursday to discuss the crisis. Doctors warned of potential disease outbreaks if water was not restored, but officials said it would take several days or more to bring back all service. "This may go on for another short period but we are doing our best to keep it as short as possible to get those reservoir levels up and provide water to our customers," said Liam Mulholland, of Northern Ireland Water. He said the shortage had been aggravated by burst pipes in vacant properties spewing water as technicians try to trace and repair the problem. The water company's website listed some 80 towns and cities with disrupted water supplies and advised customers where to find emergency supplies. There was also substantial flooding in Northern Ireland, with some floodwaters contaminated by sewage, raising public health concerns. Alison McCrystal, spokeswoman for the water company, urged consumers

not to wash their cars, hose down their properties or do "anything unnecessary" to waste water during the shortfall. She said emergency crews were working around the clock to restore service and ease fears that contaminated water could lead to a disease outbreak. McCrystal also pleaded for people with empty properties or businesses to check that their pipes were intact and their water turned off to prevent more wastage. Some families have not had fresh running water for eight days, with officials predicting it will take several more days to restore normal service. "People with young families have not been able to flush toilets and wash themselves, never mind get access to drinking water," said Dr. Peter Maguire, a general practitioner. "It's just not good enough. What's happening is really not acceptable." Many cities have made leisure and recreation centers available to the public so they can use bathroom facilities and have a place to do washing. □



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U.S. says having ambassador in Venezuela important

JORGE RUEDA

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — The U.S. government on Wednesday said it is important to have an ambassador in Venezuela, and is considering the possible consequences after President Hugo Chavez rejected Washington's chosen envoy.

Chavez on Tuesday dared the U.S. government to expel his ambassador, saying he will not allow the U.S. diplomat Larry Palmer to be ambassador because he made what Chavez described as blatantly disrespectful remarks about Venezuela.

"If the government is going to expel our ambassador there, let them do it!" Chavez said, adding: "if they're going to cut diplomatic relations, let them do it!"

In Washington, U.S. State Department spokesman Mark Toner declined to respond to Chavez's comments and repeated that the United States hopes to improve strained relations with Venezuela. He said President Barack Obama's administration was continuing to review possible consequences that Venezuela's refusal to accept Palmer might incur.

"We believe it is precisely because there are tensions in the relationship that it is important to maintain diplomatic communications at the highest level," Toner said. "We believe it is in our national interest to have an ambassador in Caracas."

Palmer, who is awaiting Senate confirmation, angered Chavez by suggesting earlier this year that morale is low in Venezuela's military and that he is concerned Colombian rebels are finding refuge in Venezuela.

Chavez, whose economy relies heavily on oil sales to the United States, has accused Palmer of dishonoring the his government by expressing concerns on several sensitive subjects — including 2008 accusations by the U.S. Treasury Department that three members of Chavez's inner circle helped Colombian rebels by supplying arms and aiding drug-trafficking

operations.

"For an ambassador to come, he has to respect this homeland," Chavez said.

State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said last week that Venezuela's decision not to accept Palmer — after initially giving its approval — will have consequences on relations with Venezuela. The State Department has also

been strongly critical of decree powers granted to Chavez by his congressional allies this month, a maneuver Crowley described as one more way for the leftist president to "justify autocratic powers."

"Now the U.S. government is threatening us that they're going to take reprisals. Well, let them do whatever they want, but that man will not

come," Chavez said Tuesday. The U.S. Embassy in Caracas, meanwhile, has been without an ambassador since Patrick Duddy finished his assignment and left in July.

Chavez's latest actions in pushing through controversial laws are contributing to the diplomatic tensions.

The National Assembly on Dec. 17 granted Chavez

broad powers to enact laws by decree for a year and a half. Opponents have condemned that and a package of other laws approved by Chavez's congressional allies, saying the legislative offensive amounts to an authoritarian power grab and will give Chavez new abilities to crack down on dissent. □

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2010: The year Africa held its first World Cup

This is a Friday June 11, 2010 file photo of soccer fans as they blow vuvuzelas following the World Cup group A soccer match between South Africa and Mexico at Soccer City in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Associated Press
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SPORTS Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email: news@arubatoday.com Website: www.arubatoday.com Tel: 582-7800 Thursday, December 30, 2010

NFL fines Favre \$50K for 'failure to cooperate'



Minnesota Vikings injured quarterback Brett Favre takes a whiff of smelling salts on the sidelines during the Vikings' NFL football game against the Philadelphia Eagles, Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2010, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

BARRY WILNER

AP Pro Football Writer

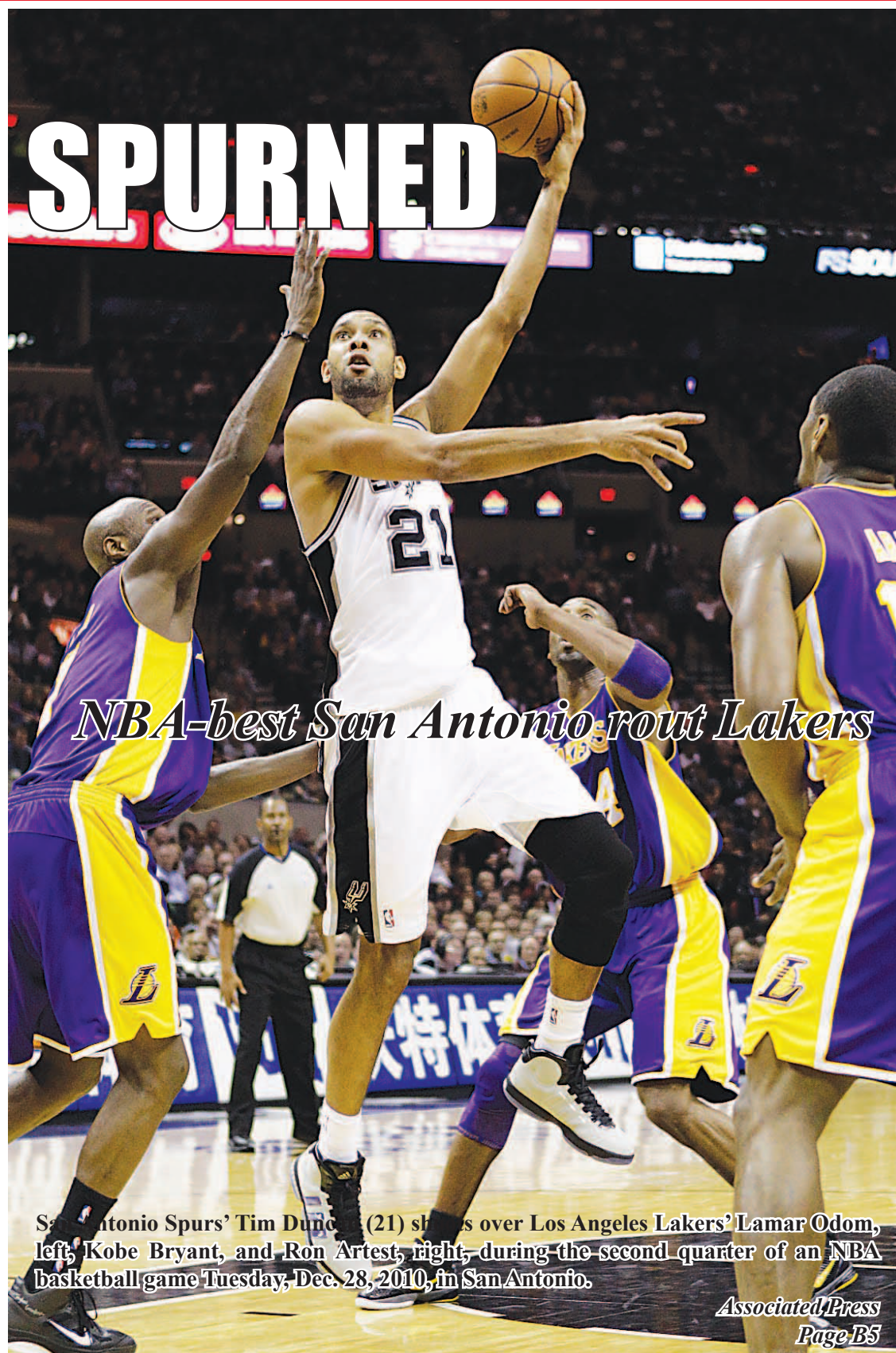
NEW YORK (AP) — Brett Favre has been fined \$50,000 by the NFL for a "failure to cooperate" with the investigation into allegations he sent inappropriate messages and lewd photos to former New York Jets game-day hostess Jenn Sterger.

The league said Commissioner Roger Goodell "could not conclude" that Favre violated the league's personal conduct policy based on the evidence currently available to him.

"The forensic analysis could not establish that Favre sent the objectionable photographs to Sterger," the statement said. "The review found no evidence to contradict the statements of both Favre and Sterger that they never met in person, nor was there anything to suggest that Sterger engaged in any inappropriate conduct."

Continued on page B4

SPURNED



NBA-best San Antonio rout Lakers

San Antonio Spurs' Tim Duncan (21) shoots over Los Angeles Lakers' Lamar Odom, left, Kobe Bryant, and Ron Artest, right, during the second quarter of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2010, in San Antonio.

Associated Press
Page B5

Iowa, North Carolina State win bowl games

TEMPE, Arizona (AP) — Back-up tailback Marcus Coker put in a record performance to lead Iowa to a 27-24 win over Missouri in college football's Insight Bowl on Tuesday.

Coker ran for 219 yards and two touchdowns. Undermanned due to injuries and suspensions, Iowa turned to Coker, who was a back-up to Adam Robinson during the regular season.

With Robinson out suspended, Coker set school records for yards and carries in front of an Insight Bowl-record 53,453 fans.

Continued on next page

BOWL GAMES**Continued from Page B1**

It was a run of a different kind that sealed the result, as Micah Hyde had a meandering 72-yard interception return in the fourth quarter.

Missouri had its way with Iowa's once-stout defense most of the night, rolling up 512 yards, including a school bowl record 434 passing by quarterback Blaine Gabbert. Gabbert finished 41 for 57 to set two more school records, but inexplicably threw an interception straight to Hyde, who dodged several tackles while running backward and sideways.

Missouri had one final chance, but a fourth-down reception by T.J. Moe with 2:15 left was overruled on review and Coker helped grind out the clock. Moe finished with an Insight Bowl record 15 receptions for 152 yards.

Once fierce rivals, these teams hadn't met in a century, despite being separated by less than 250 miles.

The 12-game rivalry ended

following a particularly brutal game in 1910, and a planned four-year series from 2005-08 also fell through, putting an interesting twist on this Midwest battle in the desert.

North Carolina State 23, West Virginia 7

In Orlando, Florida, Russell Wilson threw for 275 yards and two touchdowns in what may have been his football farewell, leading North Carolina State past West Virginia in the Champs Sports Bowl.

Wilson also had 41 yards rushing, Josh Czajkowski made three field goals and the Wolfpack won nine games in a season for only the second time in school history.

Wilson, who earned the bowl's MVP honor, may very well have played his last football game for the Wolfpack. He spent much of the summer playing baseball in the Colorado Rockies' minor-league system, and now he'll have to decide whether to come back for his senior season or move on to a

baseball career.

The Wolfpack can only hope he returns. Wilson was 28 for 45 passing, had no interceptions and handled a West Virginia defense that been solid. It was the most points that the Mountaineers allowed all season.

Wilson's 16-yard touchdown pass to Mustafa Greene put the Wolfpack up 7-0 in the first quarter, and they never had trouble moving the ball after that.

For West Virginia, Geno Smith had 196 yards passing and an injured Noel Devine ran for 50 yards, but the Mountaineers' five second-half turnovers ended any hopes of a cheerful send off for some of Bill Stewart's staff.

Stewart is being slowly forced out as coach with Dana Holgorsen, Oklahoma State's offensive coordinator, taking over at the same position next year at West Virginia before moving into Stewart's job in 2012. The game was current offensive coordinator Jeff Mullen's last game. □



Iowa defensive back Micah Hyde, left, and runningback Marcus Coker, right, are awarded the defensive and offensive players of the game trophies following the Insight Bowl NCAA college football game Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2010, in Tempe, Ariz. Iowa won 27-24.

Associated Press

Palmeiro still insists he never used steroids

By The Associated Press

Rafael Palmeiro is sticking to his story that a tainted vitamin shot caused his failed drug test five years ago, and hopes Hall of Fame voters will overlook the mistake and honor him for his 3,020 hits and 569 homers.

A week before the Baseball Writers Association of America announces its inductees to baseball's Hall of Fame, Palmeiro told SI.com in a phone interview posted Wednesday that he never used performance-enhancing drugs in his 20-year career. As he asserted in 2005 after he was suspended for failing a test, Palmeiro again insisted the anabolic steroid was in a B-12 vial given to him by Baltimore Orioles teammate Miguel Tejada.

"I was telling the truth then, and I am telling the truth now," Palmeiro said. "I don't know what else I can say. I have never taken steroids. For people who think I took steroids intentionally, I'm never going to convince them. But I hope the voters judge my career fairly and don't look at one mistake."

One of only four players in big league history

with 500 homers and 3,000 hits, Palmeiro's once certain election to the Hall is in jeopardy. Baseball voters have denied Mark McGwire, 10th on the career list with 583 homers, four times and his election seems unlikely — McGwire received only 23.7 percent of the vote last year and 75 percent is needed.

"I never played for the Hall of Fame," Palmeiro told SI.com on Tuesday. "I only played to win and have fun.

But, yes, now the Hall of Fame is important to me. Why wouldn't I want to be there? It would mean more than anything to me. I hope they don't hold me out for one mistake at the end of my career."

A four-time All-Star and three-time Gold Glove first baseman, perhaps the most memorable moment Palmeiro's career came when he boldly wagged his finger at Congress in March 2005, saying "I have never used steroids. Period."

That July he got his 3,000th hit, and three weeks later it was announced he tested positive for steroids and was suspended 10 games.

Considering the elite statistics and the late

period of his career, Palmeiro told the website he doesn't understand why people don't believe him.

"I don't want to take anything for granted, but there was a legitimate chance that I was going to get 3,000," Palmeiro said on Tuesday. "I had no motivation to take steroids because I was at the end of my career."

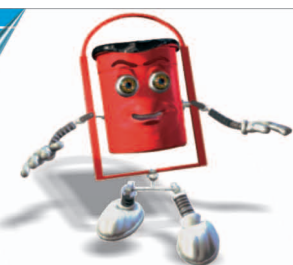
A few days before Major League Baseball made the failed test public, Palmeiro called President George W. Bush at the White House — Bush was a former owner of the Rangers, one of Palmeiro's teams along with the Cubs and Orioles.

"I had a number for him, and it was a very difficult call to make because he had been so supportive of me," Palmeiro told SI.com. "I didn't want him to read about it in the newspaper or hear it on television.

"He's always given me good advice, and that day he told me that he was behind me. He told me to just tell the truth and let the chips fall where they may," Palmeiro recalled. "He told me to tell the truth and stick with it." □

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NHL Roundup

Canucks beat Flyers, close on West lead

VANCOUVER (AP) — The Vancouver Canucks moved within a point of the NHL Western Conference lead with a 6-2 win over the Philadelphia Flyers on Tuesday.

Ryan Kesler scored twice early in the second period and the Flyers responded by replacing goalie Brian Boucher. Kesler added an assist in the third.

Jeff Tambellini had a goal, Manny Malhotra scored late in the first period, Daniel Sedin added a goal in between Kesler’s two, and Jannik Hansen scored early in the third as Vancouver beat the Flyers at home for the first time since 1989.

Danny Briere and Jeff Carter, on a late power play, scored for Philadelphia.

Penguins 6, Thrashers 3

In Pittsburgh, Sidney Crosby got two goals to extend his scoring streak to 25 games, as Pittsburgh won its final home game before the Winter Classic by beating Atlanta.

Crosby twice answered Thrashers goals by scoring in the first period, then set up Chris Kunitz’s goal 9 seconds into the third period and

another by Matt Cooke. Craig Adams also scored short-handed for Pittsburgh.

Crosby, who will try to extend his streak against the New York Islanders on Wednesday, is the first NHL player to have a streak this long since Penguins’ Mario Lemieux’s 28-game run to begin the 1995-96 season, according to STATS LLC.

The Penguins captain, peaking just as the NHL’s midseason outdoor game against Washington approaches on Saturday, continues to torment the Thrashers, who have lost their past nine in Pittsburgh.

Crosby has six goals and four assists in three games against Atlanta this season.

Wayne Gretzky (1990-91), Bryan Trottier (1981-82), Brett Hull (1991-92) and Bernie Nicholls (1984-85) also had 25 game streaks. The NHL record is Gretzky’s 51-game run in 1983-84, during a more wide-open era in which he averaged three points per game.

Lemieux had a team-record, 46-game streak in 1989-90.

Bruins 4, Lightning 3



Vancouver Canucks’ Ryan Kesler, left, and Philadelphia Flyers’ Sergei Bobrovsky, of Russia, watch as the puck goes wide of the net during the third period of an NHL hockey game in Vancouver, British Columbia, on Tuesday December 28, 2010.

Associated Press

In Tampa, Mark Recchi scored a power-play goal with 20 seconds left to lift Boston over Tampa Bay.

Recchi’s goal from the slot was his seventh this season and 570th overall in the NHL.

Boston also got goals from Michael Ryder, Steven Kampfer and Brad Marchand.

Steve Stamkos scored his 29th goal of the season for Tampa Bay.

Vincent Lecavalier and Martin St. Louis also netted.

Stars 4, Predators 2

In Nashville, the hosts crashed to their fifth straight loss, beaten by Dallas.

Loui Eriksson scored a goal and added an assist, and Andrew Raycroft made 44 saves for the Stars.

Steve Ott, Mark Fistric and Krystofer Barch also scored for the visitors.

Colin Wilson scored both Nashville goals in a span of 1:32.

In Washington, Semyon Varlamov made 25 saves to shut out Montreal and give victory to Washington.

Varlamov posted his second shutout this season, making several strong stops early as Montreal recorded the first six shots in the opening seven minutes.

Alex Ovechkin, Jay Beagle and Mike Green scored late in the first period for the Capitals.

In St. Louis, Ty Conklin shut down a team that burned him for seven goals in one game last month, stopping 25 shots in St. Louis’ victory over Chicago.

Vladimir Sobotka, Brad Boyes and Brad Winchester

scored for the Blues, who dominated much of the way to win their fourth in a row and end the Blackhawks’ four-game winning streak.

Just as Chicago got Patrick Kane back in the lineup after he missed eight games because of an ankle injury, the Blackhawks lost another key player.

Jonathan Toews, Chicago’s second-leading scorer with 33 points, was injured on a check in the first period and didn’t return.

In other NHL games it was Carolina 4, Toronto 3; Pittsburgh 6, Atlanta 3; Washington 3, Montreal 0; Boston 4, Tampa Bay 3; St. Louis 3, Chicago 1; Dallas 4, Nashville 2; Buffalo 4, Edmonton 2; Anaheim 3, Phoenix 1; and Vancouver 6, Philadelphia 2. □

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NFL Roundup

Vikings win, Eagles can't get first-round bye



Minnesota Vikings quarterback Joe Webb (14) is sent flying by a hit from Philadelphia Eagles cornerback Asante Samuel (22) in the first half of an NFL football game, Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2010, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press



This Sept. 14, 2008, file photo shows Jenn Sterger working on the sideline before the New York Jets played the New England Patriots in an NFL football game at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N. J.

Associated Press

FAVRE

Continued from Page B1

Goodell determined Favre was “not candid in several respects during the investigation resulting in a longer review and additional negative public attention for Favre, Sterger and the NFL,” the statement said. The league’s investigation began in October and the fine was announced Wednesday.

The NFL also reviewed media reports that Favre pursued two massage therapists who worked at the Jets’ facility in 2008, when Favre played for the team. But the league said that claim could not be substantiated because people with “potentially relevant information” declined to be interviewed or cooperate with investigators.

Reaching a conclusion in the case dragged out because of difficulties in setting up interviews with “certain key individuals,” the complication of retrieving and reviewing electronic records and Goodell’s decision to meet with both Favre and Sterger before reaching a conclusion, the NFL’s statement said.

The allegations against the 41-year-old Minnesota Vikings quarterback surfaced on the website Deadspin, which posted a video Oct. 7 that included text messages and voicemails allegedly left by the quarterback for Sterger, including one in which he invites her to his hotel. □

ROB MAADDI

AP Pro Football Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The NFL’s first Tuesday game in 64 years produced a fittingly unusual result as the Minnesota Vikings stunned the NFC East champion Philadelphia Eagles with a 24-14 win. Minnesota quarterback Joe Webb threw for 195 yards and ran for a touchdown in his first career start filling in for an injured Brett Favre, while Adrian Peterson ran for 118 yards and a score, helping the Vikings (6-9) knock Philadelphia out of contention for a first-round playoff bye.

The Eagles (10-5) could’ve secured a first-round bye with a victory over the Vikings and Dallas next week, plus a loss by either Chicago or Atlanta next week.

“We don’t deserve it after that performance,” Eagles coach Andy Reid said. “Every phase was terrible. We didn’t coach well enough. We didn’t play well enough. I’m disappointed in myself. It’s embarrassing.” Now the Eagles are locked into the NFC’s No. 3 seed and will host the No. 6 seed on Jan. 8 or 9. Their final game against the Cowboys is meaningless

in the standings, so it’s likely most of the starters will rest.

Two days after a winter storm forced a postponement, there wasn’t even a snowflake visible Tuesday. The game was delayed Sunday because of a storm that dumped about a foot of snow in the area.

Minnesota looked more like a team with a lot at stake rather than a group that’s ready to hit the golf courses and tropical resorts. The win could help interim coach Leslie Frazier get the job permanently.

Philadelphia quarterback Michael Vick, selected as the NFC Pro Bowl starter shortly before the game, mostly struggled after his 3-yard touchdown pass to Clay Harbor in the first quarter gave the Eagles a 7-0 lead. He lost two fumbles, threw an interception and was sacked six times.

The Vikings tied it 7-7 in the final minute of the first half when Antoine Winfield sacked Vick, knocked the ball loose and returned the fumble 45 yards for a score.

Minnesota had a touchdown overturned on the opening possession of the second half. Webb’s apparent 2-yard

TD toss to Sidney Rice was reversed when replays showed the ball was juggled out of bounds. Juqua Parker sacked Webb on the next play and the Vikings settled for Ryan Longwell’s 30-yard field goal that put them up 10-7.

Webb made it 17-7 on an impressive run, dodging and weaving through the defense on his way into the end zone for a 17-7 lead.

The Eagles cut the deficit to 3 when Vick scored on a 10-yard TD run.

But the Vikings answered on the ensuing drive. Peterson ran in from the 1 to put Minnesota up 24-14 with 6:43 left. He showed no signs of the right knee injury that had him listed as questionable.

Favre was inactive for the Vikings because of a concussion, missing his second game in three weeks after an NFL-record 297 consecutive regular-season starts.

The 41-year-old Favre got hurt last week against the Chicago Bears and was listed as doubtful. Frazier said on Monday that Favre still hadn’t passed initial concussion testing. □

Henin not yet 100 percent in injury comeback

PERTH, Australia (AP) — Former world tennis No. 1 Justine Henin will nurse an elbow injury through next month’s Australian Open and says she may be six months away from full fitness. Henin will make her return from injury at the Hopman Cup mixed teams event which starts in Perth on Saturday, ensuring she will play at least three singles and three doubles matches before the first Grand Slam of the season.

The seven-time Grand Slam winner, who last played a major event at Wimbledon in June, said her elbow was not completely healed and would have to be closely monitored in the lead-up to the Australian Open.

“It is six months since the injury and I can’t say I am 100 per cent,” Henin said Wednesday. “I am working very hard on it and I spend two hours every day on my rehabilitation.”

“When we heard about the serious injury there were concerns about the future of my career as it was pretty serious. Now step by step I can improve, but it will probably take a few more weeks and maybe months before I can be 100 per cent.”

Henin said she was not yet free of pain when she played but was “going in the right direction”. She said hard work and discipline had enabled

her to return to the court in time for the Australian Open.

In last year’s Australian Open, the Belgian emerged from almost two years off the tour and made the final, where she pushed Serena Williams to three sets. However she is tempering expectations of a similarly impressive comeback in Melbourne this year.

“I am realistic, it is my comeback, it has been a difficult year,” she said. “I started the season pretty well, but then physically it has been pretty difficult.”

“It hasn’t been an easy comeback and a serious injury like that just six months after I came back was the worst for me.”

Williams will miss this year’s event due to a long-term foot injury, meaning there will be no strong favorite in the women’s draw in Australia this year, yet Henin said it will take until midyear that she can be counted among the contenders.

“No one is dominating women’s tennis, there are a lot of ups and downs,” she said. “Serena (Williams) is not going to be there so it is going to be wide open, but I don’t consider myself one of the biggest favorites. □

NBA Roundup

Spurs cruise past Lakers

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — The San Antonio Spurs prevailed in a clash of the NBA leaders against the defending champions, beating the reeling Los Angeles Lakers 97-82 on Tuesday.

Tony Parker scored 23 points and DeJuan Blair had 17 points and 15 rebounds, leading an unlikely Spurs cast that handed the Lakers their third straight loss.

Los Angeles' Kobe Bryant finished with 21 points on 8-of-27 shooting. He missed 13 in a row at one point, and might be fuming again after criticizing his teammates following a Christmas Day loss to Miami.

The Spurs improved to 27-4, among the best starts in NBA history. The Lakers dropped to 21-10 — the first time since 2007 they've reached 10 losses this early.

Heat 106, Knicks 98

In Miami, the hosts held off a big fourth-quarter rally to beat New York.

Dwyane Wade scored a season-high 40 points, while LeBron James and Chris Bosh each finished with 18 points and 10 rebounds for Miami,

which is 15-1 in its past 16 games and has beaten the Knicks seven straight times. Miami led by as many as 22, then saw the lead cut to three before Wade's 3-pointer with just less than 2 minutes remaining helped save the Heat.

Amare Stoudemire scored 30 points for the Knicks, who were outrebounded 50-32.

Celtics 95, Pacers 83

In Indianapolis, Paul Pierce scored 21 points to lead Boston over Indiana.

Ray Allen added 17 for the Celtics, who were without point guard Rajon Rondo, missing his fifth straight game with a sprained ankle. The Celtics improved to 4-1 without him and maintained the best record in the Eastern Conference.

Brandon Rush led the Pacers with 17 points.

Raptors 84, Mavericks 76

In Dallas, rookie Ed Davis scored a career-high 17 points and pulled down 12 rebounds as undermanned Toronto upset Dallas.

Linus Kleiza and DeMar DeRozan added 16 points apiece for the Raptors, who

were missing several key players but took advantage of the injury absence of Dallas' top scorer, Dirk Nowitzki.

Toronto had dropped its previous 10 games in Dallas. Jason Terry scored 18 points for the Mavericks, who had won 17 of their previous 18.

Nuggets 95, Trail Blazers 77

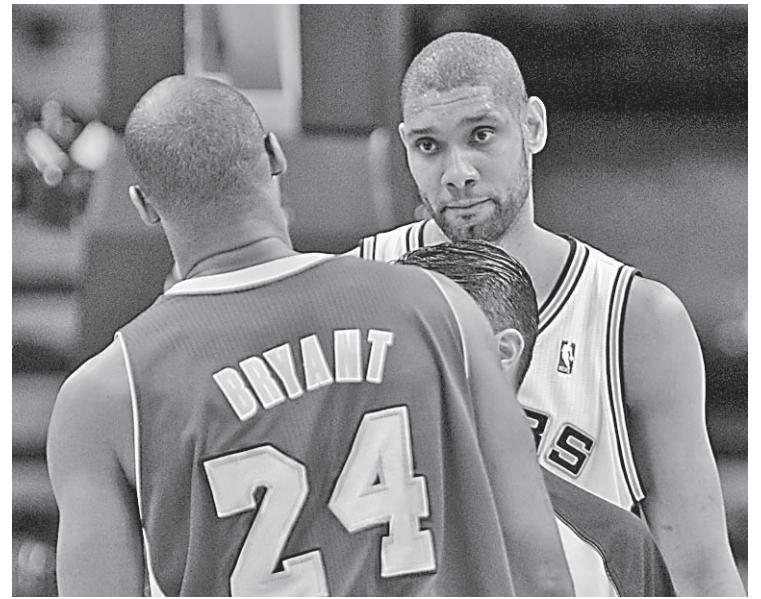
In Denver, an undermanned Denver won its first game in four by downing Portland.

Chauncey Billups scored 18 points while J.R. Smith and Nene added 17 points apiece for the Nuggets, who were without forward Carmelo Anthony for a fourth consecutive game following the death of his sister. The Nuggets said Anthony will also miss the next game before rejoining the team Thursday. LaMarcus Aldridge had 18 points and 13 rebounds for the Trail Blazers, who lost their fifth straight at Denver.

Bulls 90, Bucks 77

In Chicago, Carlos Boozer had 24 points and nine rebounds to lead Chicago past Milwaukee. Luol Deng scored 24 points for the Bulls, who have won 11 of 13 games.

John Salmons scored 18



San Antonio Spurs' Tim Duncan, right, stares down Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant after Bryant and San Antonio Spurs' George Hill exchanged words during the second quarter of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2010, in San Antonio.

Associated Press

points for the Bucks, who shot a season-low 32.1 percent.

Chicago pulled away for good midway through the fourth quarter by going on a 16-4 run.

In Cleveland, Orlando made a season-high 19 3-pointers in a victory over Cleveland.

Orlando won its fourth straight by breaking open a close game in the fourth quarter with leading scorer Dwight Howard fouled out on the bench from late in the third. The Magic extended a one-point lead at the break

to a 17-point advantage with 4:23 to play.

Gilbert Arenas scored 22 points and fellow newcomer Jason Richardson added 20 for the Magic.

The Cavaliers lost for the 14th time in 15 games.

In other NBA games it was Orlando 110, Cleveland 95; Boston 95, Indiana 83; Miami 106, New York 98; Chicago 90, Milwaukee 77; Toronto 84, Dallas 76; San Antonio 97, L.A. Lakers 82; and Denver 95, Portland 77. □

Jackson critical on NBA ownership of Hornets

NEW ORLEANS — Lakers coach Phil Jackson said Wednesday that he is "not happy" about the NBA's ownership of the Hornets and is pessimistic about the club's future in New Orleans.

Speaking before tip-off against the Hornets on Wednesday night, Jackson said the league's takeover of the Hornets raises questions about who has the final say if a player such as Chris Paul were to demand a trade.

"Who's going to pull the button on it?" Jackson said. "When Chris says he has to be traded, how's that going to go? ... Someone's going to have to make a very nonjudgmental decision on that part that's not going to irritate anyone else in the league."

Earlier this month, the NBA bought the Hornets from club founder and former majority owner George Shinn and minority partner Gary Chouest after Chouest backed away from negotiations to buy Shinn's majority shares.

When commissioner David Stern announced the league's takeover, he said the club was worth about \$300 million and that the hope was to find a local buyer who would keep the team in New Orleans. Meanwhile, Chouest has said since that he is still interested in being

the majority stakeholder in a local ownership group.

Jackson said the best thing about the move was that the team "is still here," but he added that he has doubts about the franchise's long-term future in the Big Easy.

"I don't know if New Orleans can support a team. It hasn't been successful in supporting a team until now," Jackson said. "So all the situations that have gone on with New Orleans, unfortunately things have happened and if the franchise can't make it, someone is going to have to move them."

The Hornets moved to New Orleans from Charlotte in 2002 and in most seasons have been in the bottom third of the league in attendance.

However, the team averaged nearly 17,000 fans and turned a profit as recently as two seasons ago, negating a clause in their lease of the state-owned New Orleans Arena that would have entitled them to up to \$6.8 million in subsidies in 2009.

This season, however, attendance has hovered around 14,000, raising the possibility that the club could invoke an early exit provision in its lease and leave town after this season. □

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FRIDAY DECEMBER 31st WE WILL ONLY PRESENT THE SHOWS THAT BEGIN ON OR BEFORE 7:30PM



Jeff Bridges Matt Damon

TRUE GRIT

Mon - Thurs 1:40 / 4:10 / 6:40 / 9:10
Fri & Sat 1:40 / 4:10 / 6:40 / 9:10 / 11:35
Sun & Hol 1:40 / 4:10 / 6:40 / 9:10

PG-13



Ben Stiller Robert De Niro

Little Fockers

Mon - Thurs 1:35 / 4:00 / 6:20 / 8:40
Fri & Sat 1:35 / 4:00 / 6:20 / 8:40 / 10:55
Sun & Hol 1:35 / 4:00 / 6:20 / 8:40

Mon - Thurs 2:55 / 5:10 / 7:25 / 9:40
Fri & Sat 2:55 / 5:10 / 7:25 / 9:40 / 11:55
Sun & Hol 2:55 / 5:10 / 7:25 / 9:40

PG-13



Ben Barnes Skandar Keynes

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER 3-D

3D WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

Mon - Sun & Hol 2:25 / 4:50 / 7:15

REGULAR VERSION WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

Mon - Thurs 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30
Fri & Sat 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30 / 10:50
Sun & Hol 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30

PG

Jack Black Emily Blunt

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS 3D

Mon - Thurs 1:30 / 3:20 / 5:15 / 7:10 / 9:05
Fri & Sat 1:30 / 3:20 / 5:15 / 7:10 / 9:05 / 11:00
Sun & Hol 1:30 / 3:20 / 5:15 / 7:10 / 9:05

PG

Natalie Portman Vincent Cassel

BLACK SWAN

Mon - Thurs 2:00 / 4:25 / 6:50 / 9:15
Fri & Sat 2:00 / 4:25 / 6:50 / 9:15 / 11:40
Sun & Hol 2:00 / 4:25 / 6:50 / 9:15

R

Tobin Bell Costas Mandyolr

SAW 3D

Mon - Thurs 9:35
Fri & Sat 9:35 / 11:40
Sun & Hol 9:35

R

Johnny Depp Angelina Jolie

THE TOURIST

Mon - Thurs 2:20 / 4:40 / 7:00 / 9:20
Fri & Sat 2:20 / 4:40 / 7:00 / 9:20 / 11:40
Sun & Hol 2:20 / 4:40 / 7:00 / 9:20

PG-13



Andy Roddick of USA returns the ball to Jarkko Nieminen of Finland during their match of the Paris Tennis Masters tournament, Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2010.

Associated Press

Andy Roddick on the up after illness

BRISBANE, Australia (AP) — American tennis star Andy Roddick says he feels fit for the first time in more than six months after winning his battle against the strength-sapping illness mononucleosis.

World No. 8 Roddick said he fought against the illness for most of last year when he failed to reach the quarterfinals at Wimbledon and the French and U.S. Opens.

He said on Wednesday he had worked hard to regain his fitness during the recent offseason and would look to next week's Brisbane Invitational tournament as a springboard into a better 2011.

"For me it's just a matter of getting right, getting healthy," Roddick said. "I battled sickness for a big part of last year and from there I just felt like I was playing catch-up."

"You train hard and you get hurt in training coming back. You don't train, you rest and you try and come back and your body is not right and it shows."

A former world No.1, Roddick's ranking dropped as low as 13 in August last year before getting back into single figures, but he now felt ready to push for the world's top five.

"It's the first time I've felt right since last May so when you are fit it takes a lot of the mental pressure off," Roddick said.

"You feel like you can play any way you want so I feel fresh and I feel enthused and ready."

Roddick beat Czech Radek Stepanek to win last year's final at Brisbane and said he was looking to the Jan. 2 to 9 tournament for a similar show of early season form as he builds up for next month's Australian Open.

"I came in last year and hadn't been playing much so this was a really good springboard into the year for me," he said.

"I like being in the same country but also I like this event. My wife enjoys coming here so let's not pretend I make any decisions."

Roddick is second seed for Brisbane, behind world No.4 Robin Soderling of Sweden. □

Aruba TODAY

JUST SAY NO TO DRUGS



Schild wins World Cup Slalom

ERIC WILLEMSSEN

Associated Press

SEMMERING, Austria (AP)

— Marlies Schild of Austria won a women's World Cup night slalom Wednesday for her third victory of the season and 26th overall.

Schild had a blistering first run on the Panorama course in front of a 14,000-capacity home crowd but had to overcome a major mistake in the second when she almost came to a standstill.

She finished in an aggregate time of 1 minute, 42.06 seconds to beat Olympic and world slalom champion Maria Riesch by 0.32, while fellow German Christina Geiger was 0.52 back in third for her first career podium finish.

"I had a problem with my left ski, which slid away twice. But it doesn't matter — a victory is a victory," Schild said.

"It was not easy. I knew I had a huge lead over Maria but I wanted to attack," said the Austrian, who led Riesch by 2.40 seconds after her flawless opening run.

"I was going almost too fast at the bottom part and had to hold back a bit," said Schild, who has won three of four slalom races this season to lead the discipline standings. "I was a bit anxious before the race because everybody



Austria's Marlies Schild speeds down the course during the first run of an alpine ski World Cup women's slalom race, in Semmering, Austria, Wednesday, Dec. 29, 2010.

expects me to win."

Riesch, who was only 17th after a disappointing opening run, extended her lead in the overall standings.

She now has 738 points, while Lindsey Vonn, who crashed in the first run, is second with 617.

The American defending overall champion lost balance in a sharp right turn early in her run and slid off course, hit a course worker and landed in the safety boarding. Vonn appeared unhurt, getting up immediately and skiing down to the finish area.

Riesch said: "It's very important to score points consistently in all disciplines if you go for the overall title."

The German narrowly avoided

skiing out at the penultimate gate when she almost fell backward after hitting a bump and just managed to move the right way round the final gate.

"I was obviously very annoyed with that error," Riesch said. "I knew from the course inspection that it could get dangerous there."

Riesch posted the fastest second run and called it "a dream effort. I didn't expect that. I had to fight for the right line throughout, probably because I was going very fast. I am happy and proud to take second."

Former overall champion Nicole Hosp went out in the first run after straddling a gate in the steep middle part of the course. □

Associated Press

Walchhofer adds another win to farewell season

ANDREW DAMPF

AP Sports Writer

BORMIO, Italy (AP)

— Austria's Michael Walchhofer added another victory to his farewell season Wednesday, becoming the first skier to win the grueling World Cup downhill on the Stelvio course three times. Walchhofer, who has already announced he will retire at the end of this season, clocked 1 minute, 59.66 on the circuit's most physically demanding layout for his third victory this season and the 18th of his career. "Winning three times on this difficult slope — maybe the most technical course on the circuit — really means a lot to me," Walchhofer said. □



Austria's Micheal Walchhofer, winner of an alpine ski World Cup men's downhill race, center, celebrates on the podium with second placed Switzerland's Silvan Zurbriggen, left, and third placed Italy's Christof Innerhofer, in Bormio, Italy, Wednesday, Dec. 29, 2010.

Associated Press



Austria's Thomas Morgenstern celebrates after winning the first event of the four hills ski jumping tournament in Oberstdorf, southern Germany, on Wednesday, Dec. 29, 2010.

Associated Press

Morgenstern wins Four Hills opener

OBERSTDORF, Germany (AP) — Austria's overall World Cup leader Thomas Morgenstern continued his dominance this winter by capturing the first event of the 59th Four Hills Tournament on Wednesday.

Morgenstern, who finished second in the 2007-08 Four Hills and won four straight World Cup events this winter, took top honors on the Oberstdorf hill with jumps of 131.5 meters and 138 for a total score of 289.6 points.

Matti Hautamaeki of Finland was seventh after the first jump but finished second, 16.5 points behind Morgenstern, following the second best jump of the second round at 137.5.

Austrian Manuel Fettner was third with 264 points.

Switzerland's four-time Olympic champion Simon Ammann, who is still looking for his first Four Hills title, moved from ninth to fourth place.

Second after the first jump, Austrian Andreas Kofler, who along with Morgenstern has won six of the seven World Cup jumps this season, finished fifth while 2008-09 winner Wolfgang Loitzl of Austria was ninth.

If an Austrian can win the Four Hills, it would be the first time a single nation has won three straight tournaments since Norwegian Bjoern Tore Wirkola captured the 1966-67 to 1968-69 events.

The 2000-01 winner Adam Malysz of Poland jumped from 21st after the first run to 11th.

The 2006 Four Hills co-champion Jakub Janda of the Czech Republic took 30th place while the five-time Four Hills overall winners Janne Ahonen of Finland finished 31st.

Among the jumpers who did not advance to the second jump was Finland's Ville Larinto, who was the top qualifier from Tuesday and as winner in Kuopio was the only jumper other than Morgenstern and Kofler to win an event this winter.

Austrian Gregor Schlierenzauer, who won two jumps at the 2006-07 and 2009-10 Four Hills event, did not compete after an injury with hopes of coming back for the third event in Innsbruck. □

2010: The year Africa held its first World Cup

STUART CONDIE

AP Sports Writer

LONDON (AP) — The World Cup finally made it to Africa in 2010 and plans were made to send football's showpiece to even more new destinations.

After South Africa overcame dire predictions of security problems and half-empty stadiums to stage a World Cup that united the country in celebration, FIFA voted to give future tournaments to Russia and Qatar.

South Africa's first-round exit made it the least successful host team in World Cup history, but the rest of the country mostly coped admirably with its biggest global gathering since the end of a decades-long boycott by world sport.

Fans worldwide became intimately acquainted with the incessant buzz of the vuvuzela as South Africans celebrated the World Cup and the arrival of many of the superstars they had only ever seen before on television.

But on the field, the World Cup was far from a classic. Spain's 1-0 win over the Netherlands came in the dirtiest ever final, which was an appropriate end to a tournament that promised much but delivered little.

While Germany again thrilled neutrals to take third place for a second straight tournament, Brazil was dour. Italy and England were even worse, but France took the unofficial title of tournament laughing stock — so consumed by dissent that players refused to train before a 2-1 loss to South Africa that confirmed the team's humiliating first-round exit.

Diego Maradona's presence as coach inspired his beloved Argentina to some fitfully entertaining displays, with Lionel Messi doing everything except score, but Germany dismantled the South Americans 4-0 in the quarterfinals and Maradona was fired soon after.

The fervor of home fans was quelled when five of Africa's six entrants fell in the first round. Although Ghana then beat the United States 2-1 in a game watched by 19.4 million Americans — a U.S. record beaten when 24.3 million watched the final — the



This is a Sunday, July 11, 2010 file photo of the Spanish team as they pose for photographers with the World Cup trophy, center foreground, following the World Cup final soccer match between the Netherlands and Spain at Soccer City in Johannesburg, South Africa, Spain won 1-0.

Associated Press

remaining enthusiasm turned to anger when a deliberate handball by Uruguay forward Luis Suarez denied their adopted team a winner in the last minute of the quarterfinals. Suarez was suspended from Uruguay's first semifinal match since 1954, but FIFA refused calls for additional punishment for a cynical act that became one of the most memorable moments of the tournament.

Even Spain disappointed despite following West Germany and France to become only the third side to hold the World Cup and European Championship trophies at the same time.

This was far from the stylish Spain that dominated Euro 2008 and cruised through World Cup qualifying with 10 wins from 10 games.

The Spaniards lost their opening match to Switzerland in the tournament's biggest shock, before 1-0 wins in each of the four knockout rounds made them the lowest scoring world champions ever, with eight goals from seven matches.

A squad dominated by homegrown Barcelona stars waited patiently for its talent to yield a goal before trusting that its technical superiority would allow it to keep the ball

and deny the opposition the chance to equalize.

It worked, even against a brutal display from the Netherlands in the final at Soccer City in Johannesburg. With the teams facing a penalty shootout, Andres Iniesta scored with four minutes of extra time left to clinch his country's first World Cup.

The Dutch were handed nine of the final's record 14 yellow cards and defender John Heitinga became only the fifth man to get a red card on football's biggest stage.

It was a huge anticlimax, especially after a clearly frail Nelson Mandela had turned up to wave to fans at the stadium in Soweto where 20 years earlier he had held his first mass rally following his release from jail.

Spain coach Vicente del Bosque seemed to have tightened things up after Barcelona's shock defeat to Inter Milan in the semifinals of Europe's Champions League.

With Spain internationals Xavi Hernandez, Carles Puyol, Gerard Pique, Sergio Busquets, Pedro and Victor Valdes in its lineup, the defending champions dominated Inter with an astonishing 71 percent possession over two

matches but left space on the counterattack to lose 3-2 on aggregate.

Inter's 3-1 win in the first leg owed much to the sort of precision and patience Spain would show at the World Cup, where Busquets and Xabi Alonso effectively mirrored Inter's defensive shield of Thiago Motta and Esteban Cambiasso.

Inter and Germany were just about the only sides able to stop Messi during a year in which he made sure the repeated comparisons between him and Maradona — still Argentina's greatest ever player — ceased to become far-fetched.

Messi helped Barcelona retain the Spanish league and scored an incredible 58 club goals in 2010 to maintain his status as the world's best player, despite Cristiano Ronaldo's sparkling form for Real Madrid.

The dethroning of Barcelona — which by mid December of the following season was unbeaten in 22 matches and had scored 31 goals while conceding only one in the last seven of those — was simply the latest entry in Jose Mourinho's astounding career. Mourinho led Inter to an unprecedented treble of Serie A title, Italian Cup and Champions League, with Bayern Munich beaten 2-0 in

the final in Madrid.

Mourinho swiftly quit Inter — still with a record of not having lost a home league match with any team since February 2002 — and went to Real Madrid. After a strong start to the 2010-11 season, Madrid was rocked by November's 5-0 mauling at Barcelona but, with his track record, Mourinho could still end the season on a high.

Inter won December's Club World Cup to end 2010 with an Italian record five trophies in a calendar year. Inter beat TP Mazembe in the final after the African champion had shocked Copa Libertadores holder Internacional in the previous round, but that was a rare high point under Mourinho's successor Rafa Benitez.

Benitez's former club Liverpool was embroiled in a lengthy and convoluted dispute over its ownership that was only resolved when Britain's High Court forced American businessmen Tom Hicks and George Gillett Jr. to sell up.

Liverpool remained in American hands as Boston Red Sox owners New England Sports Ventures bought the club, but the team was way behind England's elite on the field. □

Only 1 in 5 Americans want government to regulate Internet

A new Rasmussen Poll says that most Americans are either indifferent to, or against, the Federal Communications Commission regulating the Internet, according to a new story from Mashable.com.

The research company interviewed 1,000 people, asking them, "Should the FCC regulate the Internet like it does radio and television?" Of the respondents, only 21 percent were behind such regulation, while 54 percent said they wanted the FCC to stay out of Internet regulation. The other 25 percent said they weren't sure.

The numbers are interesting, but not altogether unexpected, especially in the wake of the FCC's vote last week to institute new rules for Internet service providers. Those stated that ISPs can't adjust the speed at which certain content is carried at least over high-speed cable networks. On the mobile web, the Internet broadcasted to smartphones, the FCC left carriers a lot more freedom to discriminate

content.

When it comes to net neutrality, which is the centerpiece of what the poll is about, few people understand all the nuances. It's not surprising that of the respondents to the Rasmussen poll, only 20 percent said they were following the news about net neutrality "very closely," with another 35 percent saying they were following it "somewhat closely." It's a tough issue to be educated about, and the Rasmussen poll's major question one of additional government regulation paints the question in a less favorable light than if it were to ask Americans if they wanted the government to force ISPs to keep the Internet free and open, for example.

Net neutrality advocates want the government to step in and legislate an open Internet, in which ISPs are legally not able to dictate the connection speed of content to the people and companies providing that content. But in the Rasmussen poll, most respondents 52

percent said they'd prefer free market competition to government regulation. Twenty-seven percent went the other way, opting for the government to take control to keep Internet users and content providers protected.

A somewhat political issue The issue is also one of politics: Republicans and independents opt for free market competition to keep the Internet free, while the largest margin of Democrats, 46 percent, preferred the FCC step in.

And a majority of the people polled, regardless of their political orientation, don't trust the government to regulate the Internet fairly: 56 percent said they thought the FCC would use its new powers to promote some kind of political agenda; only 28 percent thought the government could be trusted with authority to regulate the Internet.

With the FCC's new rules in place, there's a bit of a stalemate between the two sides: on the one hand, the



FCC has at least taken steps to preserve net neutrality on desktop computers, but the mobile Internet has left a lot more latitude for carriers. At the same time, all that free market regulation that poll respondents were hoping for can very well manifest itself in the mobile web, proving or disproving if that model can work.

The best thing people concerned with the net neutrality fight can do, it seems, is get the word out and try to

educate other people about the battle. With more information about what the government, and what ISPs, are both poised to try to do, voters will be in a better position to make the decision or shape the political discussion.

But if there's one thing the Rasmussen polls shows, it's that the battle for net neutrality is being fought by the minority, while the rest of us will have to live with the consequences of what they decide. □

Paypal to help set up e-commerce hub in China mega-city

US online payment service Paypal has agreed to help set up an international e-commerce hub in southwestern China as more foreign companies cash in on the country's fast-growing Internet sales market.

Paypal and the government of Chongqing have signed a deal to jointly develop a foreign exchange settlement platform in the mega-city to enable users to pay for cross-border online shopping transactions, they said in a joint statement.

They also agreed to set up five international e-commerce centres over the next few months for verification, investment promotion, national telesales, merchant training and regional business development.

Chongqing has become a popular destination for foreign companies wanting to set up operations away from coastal regions, where



rising wages and a labour shortage have driven up their costs.

The city's mayor, Huang Qifan, said the deal with Paypal "will help Chongqing become China's settlement centre for international e-commerce".

"It will also contribute to the development of Chongqing into the financial services centre of west China," he said in the statement.

The transaction volume of China's online payment market totalled 725.5 billion

yuan (109.5 billion dollars) in the first nine months of the year, boosted by the booming e-commerce market, according to Analysys International.

The value of online payments is expected to hit one trillion yuan for the full year, the Beijing-based research company said in a note.

PayPal, a subsidiary of US e-commerce giant eBay, has more than 84 million active users around the world and allows payment in 24 currencies. □

What Can SMBs Learn from the WikiLeaks Fiasco?

The biggest security story of 2010 is the WikiLeaks posting of diplomatic cables that rocked the U.S. government more than once. The document leaks shed a blinding light on enterprise data security at a whole new level. But what can small and midsize businesses (SMBs) learn from the security fiasco? Plenty.

Similar to enterprise policy, SMBs should build best practices around measuring and monitoring who accesses their data and deny access based on rules, said Justin Strong, a product marketing manager at Novell. Data encryption and an automated way to enforce encryption when dealing with USB flash drives and other removable storage devices are the key to avoiding this type of leak.

"It is extremely important to educate employees on the dangers of RSDs Removable Storage Devices. Never use an unknown USB stick or other form of removable media these can frequently have malware on them," Strong said. "Second, costs, which are top of mind with all SMBs, shouldn't prevent you from implementing a basic set of security policies. Even baseline solutions can go a long way."

Information Security Matters

Oliver Lavery, director of security research and development for nCircle, said the main lesson for every business in this mess is that information security matters. The government and many of the companies that are opposing WikiLeaks are just shooting the messenger, he said.

"The problem isn't WikiLeaks at all, and shutting them down is pointless. Once the information had been (taken by users), they could have uploaded it to BitTorrent, or any number of other online forums. The problem is that there was a systemic failure to protect information that was classified as secret," Lavery said. □

Clooney, Google, UN team up to watch Sudan border



A group founded by American actor George Clooney said Tuesday it has teamed up with Google, a U.N. agency and anti-genocide organizations to launch satellite surveillance of the border between north and south Sudan to try to prevent a new civil war after the south votes in a secession referendum next month. Clooney's Not On Our Watch is funding the start-up phase Satellite Sentinel Project that will collect real-time satellite imagery and combine it with field analysis from the Enough Project and the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, organizers said. The data will point out movements of troops, civilians and other signs of impending conflict. The U.N. Operational Satellite Applications

Program and Google will then publish the findings online. "We want to let potential perpetrators of genocide and other war crimes know that we're watching, the world is watching," Clooney said in a statement. "War criminals thrive in the dark. It's a lot harder to commit mass atrocities in the glare of the media spotlight." The groups hope that early warnings will reduce the risk of violence. Southern Sudan's looming Jan. 9 independence referendum has raised fears of renewed north-south civil war. The vote is the result of a 2005 peace deal that ended a 21-year conflict that claimed the lives of two million people and left twice as many displaced. □

Janet Jackson to launch tour in Singapore

Pop star Janet Jackson wanted to find her most avid fans and they are apparently in Asia. After asking fans for suggestions over her website, Jackson announced that she would launch her world tour in Singapore on February 7. She will also perform in Hong

Kong on February 14.

"Your votes are helping me decide where to bring this very intimate, very different show," she said in a statement issued Monday. The chart-topping singer and younger sister of late pop icon

Michael Jackson plans to tour 35 cities in 2011 to promote her new album, which features 35 of her top hits. Jackson last planned to tour Asia in 2009 with five concerts in Japan but canceled them, with her promoter blaming the global economic crisis. □



Media blitz preps viewers for Winfrey OWN channel

The Oprah Winfrey Network launching Saturday is wary of promising too much of a good thing Winfrey herself. In stoking interest in the cable channel, the goal is to exploit Winfrey's popularity while emphasizing that OWN won't

be all Oprah, all the time. "We really don't want to be a niche brand. We want to be a mainstream cable" network with appeal beyond Winfrey's fan base, said Darren Schillace, vice president of consumer marketing for OWN. "Phase

one" of the marketing effort aims to "manage expectations that it's not 24/7 Oprah on the network," Schillace said, with Winfrey committed to appearing in at least 70 hours of programming in 2011. Helping viewers find OWN on the nation's various and crowded cable systems is another key goal in spreading the word about the joint venture between Winfrey's Harpo Inc. and Discovery Communications. The effort to position OWN as Oprah-plus doesn't mean barring Winfrey, or her famous pals, from the premiere hoopla. And it hasn't led to understated promos for the reportedly \$189 million gamble by Discovery. "Watch our stunning and heart-pounding new video featuring so many stars and so much energy that it will leave you breathless," gushes the online heart of Planet Oprah, Oprah.com, in a section devoted to OWN. The media queen herself is central to an OWN ad that

debuted in movie theaters, vowing to bring her talk show-crafted message of self-empowerment to the channel's bigger canvas. "What if I could take every hero who inspired me, every lesson that motivated me, every opportunity that was ever given to me and give it to you," says OWN chairman Winfrey, beaming prettily against an unreal blue sky dotted by soaring balloons and puffy clouds. The spot is backed by the song "Own It," written by the Black Eyed Peas' will.i.am for "Your OWN Show: Oprah's Search for the Next TV Star" and, in a neat bit of synergy, included as a bonus track on the Peas' new album. (Another pop star, Seal, wrote the theme song for "Weight of My Mistakes," an OWN series about female prisoners in Indiana.) Barbara Walters helped out by showcasing Winfrey in an hourlong special that aired early in December, well before the planned spring finale of Winfrey's syndicated



daytime talk show but helpfully adjacent to OWN's debut. Then there's the Winfrey-driven O magazine, which devotes an impressive chunk of its January issue to the upcoming channel and its stars, including the hosts of "The Gayle King Show" and "Our America with Lisa Ling." Ads have been placed in other magazines, including Vanity Fair, and on radio and cable ("If they watch TV, we want them to watch more TV," Schillace said of his targets). Billboards feature Winfrey's image, with one going up in New York City's Times Square in January, and ads are carried on buses and taxis. □

Real-life member of 'Sound of Music' family dies



A longtime friend says a woman whose family inspired the movie "The Sound of Music" has died. Agathe von Trapp was 97. Mary Louise Kane said

Wednesday that von Trapp died the previous day at a hospice in the Baltimore suburb of Towson after suffering congestive heart failure in November. Von Trapp was the oldest daughter of Austrian naval officer Capt. Georg Ritter von Trapp. His seven children by his first wife were the basis for the singing family in the 1965 film. Kane lived with Agathe von Trapp for five decades and ran a kindergarten with her at the Sacred Heart Catholic parish in Glyndon, Md. □



Dec. 26 storms delay \$1B in retail spending

The blizzard that swept through the Northeast on Sunday and Monday delayed \$1 billion in retail spending, according to research firm ShopperTrak, but won't derail a holiday shopping season expected to be the best since 2007. The effect won't be as bad as last year's pre-Christmas snowstorm that similarly paralyzed parts of the East Coast. That cost retailers an estimated \$2 billion, according to weather research firm Planalytics.

About \$10 billion in retail sales usually occurs Dec. 26-27, ShopperTrak says. Bad weather likely delayed about 10 percent of that.

The storm's effects weren't enough to change ShopperTrak's estimate for a 4 percent gain over last year in revenue for the Nov. 1-Dec. 31 holiday season. Retailers will still see much of the spending when shoppers return to stores as streets are cleared and transportation restored. This year's storm cost retailers 11.2 percent of their foot traffic Sunday and 13.9 percent Monday, ShopperTrak estimates.

The fact that the day after Christmas fell on a Sunday this year might have hurt sales a

bit even where it didn't snow, ShopperTrak founder Bill Martin said, because of local laws that limit or ban Sunday hours in some places. Dec. 26 will rank 10th-busiest day of the holiday shopping season, the firm estimates. Last year, it was second-busiest behind Black Friday.

Black Friday was again the busiest shopping day this year, with \$10.69 billion in sales. Coming in second was Dec. 23, as last-minute shoppers picked up \$7.86 billion in gifts and other items and gave retailers a strong finish.

Strong sales the week ending Dec. 31 which account for about 15 percent of total holiday spending could make this year the best holiday season ever.

Earlier this week, MasterCard Advisors SpendingPulse, another research firm, said total consumer spending excluding autos rose 5.5 percent to \$584.3 billion from Nov. 5 through Dec. 24, compared with the same period a year ago. SpendingPulse tracks all forms of spending, including cash.

That marks the biggest increase since 2006. □



Microsoft co-founder relaunches tech patent suit

Microsoft Corp co-founder Paul Allen relaunched a wide-ranging patent lawsuit against Apple Inc, Google Inc, Facebook and others with specific allegations that the companies are illegally using technology owned by his company.

Interval Licensing LLC, a small research company set up by Allen in 1992, originally filed a broad patent suit in federal court in Seattle in August, but Judge Marsha Pechman dismissed it on the grounds that it did not specify any actual products or devices. The revised suit was filed by Interval on Tuesday.

Allen, who co-founded Microsoft with Bill Gates in 1975, claims Interval was central to research and development of technology in the Internet arena in the 1990s, amassing more than 300 patents and providing research assistance to Google.

In the suit, Allen's company claims four of its patents chiefly related to the way Web data is sorted and presented have been infringed by a number of successful companies.

MULTIPLE CLAIMS

The first patent concerns the generation of data related to information being browsed. Interval claims Google uses this technology to match advertisements from third parties to content being displayed, while AOL's sites use it to suggest items related to news stories.

Interval claims Apple's iTunes service uses the technology to suggest music based on a user's searches, and that eBay Inc, Facebook, Netflix, Yahoo Inc and Office Depot's sites have also infringed the patent in the way they direct users to related content.

The second and third patents concern relaying information on a computer screen in a peripheral, unobtrusive manner, such as in an instant messaging box or overlay.

Interval claims its patent has been infringed by features in AOL's Instant Messenger, Apple's Dashboard, Google Talk and Gmail Notifier, Google's Android phone system and Yahoo Widgets. □

S&P 500 eyes best December since 1991



U.S. stocks advanced in a thinly traded session on Wednesday with the S&P 500 eyeing its best December in nearly two decades as investors remained optimistic about the prospects for equities next year.

The S&P 500 has gained 6.7 percent so far this month and has risen in 17 of the last 20 sessions. However, with volume around the holidays registering some of the lowest levels of the year,

some investors are waiting for January to see if the trend holds.

"People are hoping that the consumer is back and that will help fuel the engine and grow some earnings so that companies will start hiring," said Frank Ingarra, a portfolio manager at Hennessy Funds in Stamford, Connecticut. "The next quarter will be the interesting quarter. Does the euphoria from Christmas and the holidays carry forward or

not."

The Dow Jones industrial average (.DJI) gained 23.42 points, or 0.20 percent, to 11,598.96. The Standard & Poor's 500 Index (.SPX) rose 2.31 points, or 0.18 percent, to 1,260.82. The Nasdaq Composite Index (.IXIC) added 4.70 points, or 0.18 percent, to 2,667.58.

The S&P 500 has risen above levels reached on September 12, 2008, the last trading day before Lehman Brothers collapsed, and is on course for its biggest December gains since 1991 when it rose 11.2 percent. Retailers rose, with BJ's Wholesale Club Inc (BJ.N) jumping 6.5 percent to \$47.36 after the New York Post reported buyout firm Leonard Green & Partners remained interested in buying the warehouse club operator and may launch a hostile bid.

The Morgan Stanley Retail index (.MVR) climbed 0.8 percent, and the S&P Retail index (.RLX) gained 0.4 percent. □



Donor in 1st successful transplant dies in Maine



A man who donated a kidney to his dying twin brother 56 years ago in what's recognized as the world's first successful organ transplant has died.

Ronald Lee Herrick died Monday at the Augusta Rehabilitation Center in Maine. He was 79. His wife, Cynthia, said his health deteriorated after undergoing heart surgery in October.

Herrick donated a kidney to his twin brother, Richard, at what is now Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. Because they were identical twins, there was no problem with rejection. The United Network for Organ Sharing says it was the first successful organ transplant.

The operation on Dec. 23, 1954, kept Herrick's brother alive for eight years. Lead surgeon Dr. Joseph Murray went on to win a Nobel Prize. □

Playtime Is Important



Playtime is more than a source of amusement for kids and their parents. It teaches toddlers social skills, how to pay attention and to use their imagination, says the American Academy of Pediatrics.

It's important to offer your child time and toys to help promote growth and development, the AAP advises.

Create a play space that's safe for your child, the group says. It should be a place where your

child can play freely without the risk of injury, and where you can easily keep an eye on your child.

Even simple toys can encourage imagination and wonder. Examples include blocks, crayons, plastic dishware, and pots and pans.

And don't forget to include activities outside the home, such as a story hour at the local library, a trip to the playground, or a playgroup at the nearby YMCA.

Deadliest Cancer Getting Smaller Chunk of Research Dollars

Consider this lung cancer is the most deadly form of cancer in the United States, killing about 157,300 people every year more than colon, breast and prostate cancer combined, according to the U.S. National Institutes of Health.

It is also the nation's second leading cause of death, second only to heart disease.

And yet lung cancer attracts fewer federal research dollars per death than the other leading forms of cancer demise. Doctors have yet to find a reliable method for screening for lung cancer. And new treatments for lung cancer roll out at a snail's pace compared with therapies for other cancers.

So why does the top cancer killer attract so little attention?

Largely because people are perceived to have done this to themselves, garnering little public sympathy, said

Kay Cofrancesco, director of advocacy relations for the Lung Cancer Alliance, a national nonprofit group dedicated to lung cancer support and advocacy. About 90 percent of men and 80 percent of women who die from lung cancer are current or former smokers, according to NIH.

"In demonizing the tobacco companies, we've then demonized the smoker," Cofrancesco said. "So there is that blame-the-victim mentality when it comes to lung cancer patients." Yet some advances are being made. Clinical trials are being conducted on one potential screening tool for lung cancer, she said. Targeted therapies are being developed based on the genetics of lung cancer.

But clearly more can be done, experts say. Survival rates for lung cancer are dismal compared with other cancers, largely because lung cancer is most often not detected until it has

metastasized.

"Some lung cancers have a tendency to spread widely throughout the body," said Dr. Len Lichtenfeld, deputy chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society. "By the time they have symptoms, the cancer has spread."

Because smoking is so closely linked to lung cancer, most money aimed at prevention has gone into programs to promote smoking cessation, Cofrancesco said.

These programs have not made a lot of headway. Between 1998 and 2008, the percentage of U.S. residents who currently smoked declined just 3.5 percent, from 24.1 to 20.6 percent, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Even as some people quit, perhaps encouraged by strict smoke-free laws and public anti-smoking campaigns, others take up the habit.



Quitting smoking does provide numerous health benefits improved lung function and decreased blood pressure among them but former smokers will always have an elevated risk for developing lung cancer. Three of every five new lung cancer cases are reported in former smokers, whereas one of five cases comes from current smokers, according to the Lung Cancer Alliance. □

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Couples Grow Old, Happy and Sad Together



As couples grow old together, their happiness levels also wax and wane in sync, a new study suggests.

The findings suggest a possible resource that hasn't been tapped for promoting healthy aging. Similar to a pill or other treatment, a chipper spouse may boost a partner's feelings of well-being.

While the findings may seem obvious, lead researcher Christiane Hoppmann said this

phenomenon hadn't been studied over a long period, following the same couples over time instead of just looking at snapshots or asking couples to look back over their lives and recall well-being. [5 Things That Will Make You Happier]

"There are all kinds of changes in perception that occur over the course of a marriage that make you look at it differently in retrospect," said Hoppmann, who is in the department of psychology at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

Marriage and aging

"What's interesting to me is that there's this disconnect between psychologists interested in marital relationships and what we as aging researchers tend to do," Hoppmann told LiveScience.

So she and her colleagues turned to the Seattle Longitudinal Study, an aging study where data is collected every seven years, to look at couples' happiness as they aged.

The researchers analyzed data of 178 married couples (356 participants in total) followed over a 35-year period between 1956 and 1991. Happiness was gauged with the question, "Would you describe your life until

the current year as being ..." Answers ranged from 1 to 5, with 1 being "very happy" and 5 indicating "very unhappy."

The researchers also accounted for age, education, children and length of marriage.

They found that if one spouse reported high levels of happiness, the other spouse inevitably said the same. Likewise, if one member of a couple showed a dip in happiness compared with an earlier survey, so did the partner. Spousal happiness levels and changes in happiness were much more similar than those found between randomly selected men and women.

As people age and their health inevitably suffers, the researchers expected happiness would also take a hit. But the results showed that while there were some ups and downs within individual couples, average happiness for the group didn't change much over time.

Is happiness contagious?

Now that Hoppmann and her colleagues know spouses tag along with one another on the happiness ride, they hope to figure out why. Is happiness contagious? "There is literature that suggests that when it

comes to happiness and emotional functioning that oftentimes the husband's feelings have a stronger impact on the wife's feelings than vice versa," Hoppmann told LiveScience in a telephone interview.

Research by Hoppmann not yet published in a scientific journal suggests a sort of contagion. The results showed that, for example, if one spouse has a decline in health, it is associated with depressive symptoms in the other spouse.

"If someone is restricted in their own mobility that also impacts the happiness of the spouse," Hoppmann said.

Aging couples even tend to look alike, similarities that grew the longer spouses were together, other research has shown.

The researchers also hope to do follow-up studies to find out whether marriage is good for a person's health. For instance, can a person who is very happy lift up their spouse and can that serve as a resource in old age? And can that go both ways—for example, would a person who is having a hard life drag their partner down? The team also wants to know whether the happiness link works only for long-term relationships. □

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Uranus to Align With Jupiter This Week

This week, for the third time in eight months, Uranus will have a "close encounter" with Jupiter. Jupiter is currently the brightest object in the evening sky, being high in the south at sunset, and setting in the west around 11 p.m. EST.

As seen in a small telescope, Uranus will pass within half a degree north of Jupiter, giving

an unusual opportunity to observe two "gas giant" planets in the same field of view. This juxtaposition will show just how different these two planets are in apparent size. Jupiter will measure 38 arc seconds in diameter, more than ten times the size of Uranus, 3.5 arc seconds.

Uranus in turn will dwarf



Jupiter's four brightest moons, ranging in size from tiny Europa (0.84 arc seconds) to Ganymede (1.4 arc seconds). [Diagram of the Jupiter-Uranus close encounter]

Angular distances in the sky are measured in degrees, arc minutes and arc seconds. There are 360 degrees in a circle, 60 arc minutes in a degree, and 60 arc seconds in an arc minute. The Big Dipper measures 25 degrees across, and the sun and moon are both half a degree (30 arc minutes) across. Thus, Jupiter is about 1/50 of the diameter of the moon, comparable in angular size to a medium-size lunar crater. □

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Ex presidente Carlos Andrés Pérez será sepultado en Venezuela

MIAMI (AP) - Carlos Andrés Pérez será sepultado en Venezuela luego que los familiares del ex presidente en Miami accedieron a la solicitud de otros familiares de repatriar los restos al país sudamericano, informaron el miércoles los parientes aquí.

“La familia Pérez Matos (que reside en Miami) no va a controvertir la acción de la familia Pérez Rodríguez” de repatriar los restos, dijo la familia Pérez Matos en un comunicado.

“En la presente hora de Venezuela, el amor hacia ésta y hacia sus grandes hombres hay que prodigarlos. Repatriarlo es una manera de rendirle tributo, por lo tanto ni Cecilia Matos, ni sus hijas, María Francia y Cecilia Victoria, van a convertirse en obstáculo”, añade la declaración.

Minutos después de emitir el comunicado, una de las hijas, María Francia Pérez, dijo a la AP que la repatriación no será inmediata. “Esto es un proceso que lleva tiempo, un acuerdo mutuo entre la familia” de Pérez que está en Miami y la parte que está en Venezuela, manifestó María Francia Pérez. Al ser consultada sobre si su padre iba a permanecer en la casa funeraria hasta ser repatriado, respondió “sí”. Se negó a responder si su madre estaba casada legalmente con Pérez y no quiso dar otros detalles.

En Caracas, Carolina Pérez, hija del fallecido presidente, dijo luego a la AP que los familiares del ex mandatario en Venezuela “estamos muy contentas por haber hecho esto, por haber acabado con esta historia (la disputa sobre dónde iba a ser enterrado)”. “Esto nunca debió haber pasado y gracias a Dios que terminó así”, dijo Carolina poco después de salvado el obstáculo. “Y la verdad, de corazón, espero que ellas (los familiares en Miami) nos acompañen aquí el día que toque enterrar a mi padre”.

Indicó que el nieto mayor del ex mandatario, Gabriel Pérez, de 37 años, viajará la próxima semana a Miami y estará a



De izquierda a derecha: Cecilia Matos, compañera de Carlos Andrés Pérez, su hija Cecilia Victoria Pérez y su otra hija María Francia Pérez tomadas de las manos en el funeral del ex presidente venezolano en Miami el miércoles 29 de diciembre del 2010. (Foto AP/Lynne Sladky)

cargo de organizar el traslado, el cual espera se concrete lo más “pronto posible”.

El entierro de Pérez se iba a realizar en esa ciudad de Florida el miércoles pero fue suspendido luego que un juez aceptó una demanda de los familiares del ex presidente en Venezuela en que pedían impedir su inhumación allí y forzar su repatriación. El juez de Miami-Dade Gerald Hubbard ordenó el martes suspender la inhumación, confirmaron las fuentes.

La orden de Hubbard acepta el pedido de la primera esposa de Pérez, Blanca Pérez, de impedirle a la casa funeraria “tomar cualquier medida para enterrar” o “disponer de cualquier otra manera” los restos, hasta que reciba nuevo aviso de la corte. No se programaron audiencias ni otros pasos judiciales de inmediato en el caso.

Horas antes, Carolina Pérez declaró a la AP: “Nosotros tomamos una medida judicial para suspender el entierro en la ciudad de Miami, ya que la familia Matos en Estados Unidos en ningún momento nos consultó, fueron tomando decisiones de manera unilateral, de hecho por razones que no entendemos, porque siempre hubo un canal

abierto entre ellos y nosotros”. En una declaración jurada ante el tribunal, Blanca Pérez afirma: “Mi esposo y yo nunca nos divorciamos y permanecemos legalmente casados hasta la fecha de su muerte”.

MISA EN MIAMI

Cecilia Matos, quien fue secretaria y compañera íntima de Pérez durante muchos años y vivía con él en Miami, ha sido en años recientes ampliamente identificada como su esposa. Ella y las dos hijas que tuvieron, María Francia y Cecilia

Victoria, deseaban enterrarlo en Miami, pues opinaban que Pérez no debía ser enterrado en Venezuela mientras ésta esté gobernada por Hugo Chávez. La misa del miércoles, en una iglesia decorada con arreglos navideños, duró unos 45 minutos. Estuvo presenciada por unas 200 personas que siguieron las oraciones del padre colombiano Alvaro Huertas, quien había bautizado a dos de los nietos de Pérez.

“Hoy es el día más grande, más importante, de su peregrinación (de Pérez) por la vida, le estamos celebrando su Pascua,

su paso de este mundo a la plenitud de la vida”, expresó Huertas.

Entre los presentes de la misa, además de familiares, estaban el ex embajador venezolano ante la ONU Diego Arria, el alcalde de Caracas Antonio Ledezma y la canciller colombiana María Angela Holguín.

Ledezma declaró que a Pérez no lo mató una enfermedad, sino “el dolor de patria ausente. Vamos a recordarlo con alegría y a homenajearlo comprometiéndonos a que unidos vamos a restablecer la democracia por la que luchó toda su vida”.

El ataúd, cubierto con la bandera de Venezuela, fue cargado al entrar a la iglesia por varios hombres vestidos de negro, entre ellos Ledezma, quienes lo colocaron frente al altar. En el velatorio en Miami el miércoles, el sacerdote venezolano Alexi Bastidas, un viejo amigo de la familia que viajó especialmente desde Nueva York, se acercó al ataúd y con una Biblia en sus manos lo despidió, leyendo el responso universal de los difuntos. Pérez representa “la democracia de Venezuela y el sueño de un país que todos podemos conquistar”, manifestó el cura a la AP. Pérez, quien pasó en Miami los últimos años de su vida, falleció aquí el sábado a los 88 años. □

Alvaro Uribe fuera de peligro tras accidente equino

BOGOTÁ (AP) - El ex presidente Alvaro Uribe fue pateado el martes por un caballo y, aunque se encuentra fuera de peligro, está internado en un hospital del departamento de Antioquia, informaron sus familiares. “Lo pateó un caballo a la altura de la espinilla de la pierna izquierda”, dijo en diálogo telefónico con la AP Tomás Uribe Moreno, el hijo mayor del ex mandatario. “Pero gracias a Dios está fuera de peligro”.

Uribe Moreno explicó que el accidente se produjo sobre las 18:00 hora local en una hacienda del empresario Manuel Santiago

Mejía, ubicada en el municipio de Rionegro, departamento de Antioquia, a 225 kilómetros al noroeste de Bogotá.

“Fue un golpe duro que le alcanzó a tocar el hueso. Sólo le van a hacer un lavado para evitar una infección”, añadió. Precisó que aproximadamente “en una hora mi papá será dado de alta” de una clínica de Rionegro. Uribe, de 58 años, quien gobernó Colombia del 2002 al 7 de agosto pasado, es reconocido como un excelente jinete. El ex mandatario y su familia se encuentran de vacaciones en su finca de Rionegro. □



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